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The First Glimpse of the New World.

THE WEST INDIES.

BY

CHARLES H. EDEN, F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF "FROZEN ASIA," "THE FIFTH CONTINENT," ETC., ETC.

London:

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,

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T.

PREFACE.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to lay before the reader a sketch of the West India Islands from the time of their discovery to the present date. Regarded in a purely historical light, the annals of the Antilles are fraught with the deepest interest; for they portray most painfully the debasement consequent on slavery—a moral deterioration not confined to the wretched victims of an odious system, but exercising an equally pernicious influence on the ruling class, to whatever nationality they belonged. Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Englishmen have all been guilty of terrible excesses in that fair quarter of the globe; but, while betraying just indignation at the cruelties perpetrated by other nations, I have made no unfair effort to gloss over the deeds of my own countrymen.

CHARLES H. EDEN.

London, December, 1879.

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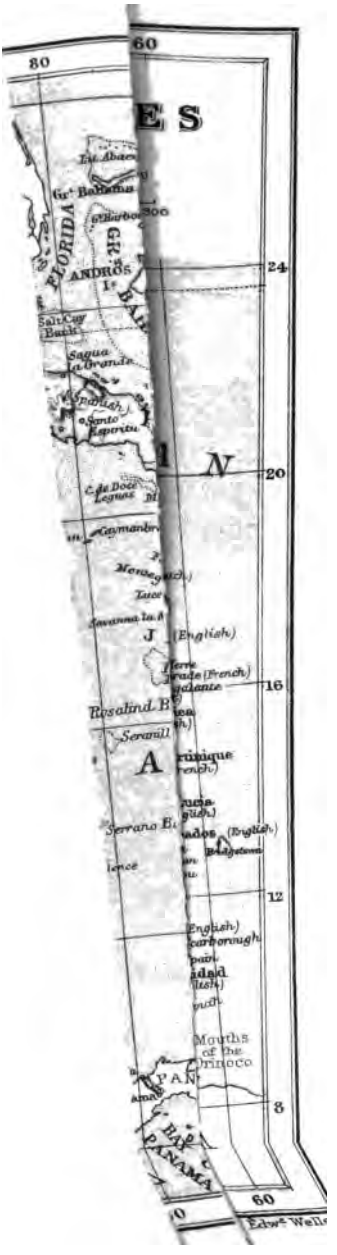


THE WEST INDIES.

CHAPTER I.

DISCOVERY OF THE WEST INDIES.

NEARLY four centuries ago, in the year 1492, before the southern point of the great African Continent had been doubled, and when the barbaric splendour of Cathay and the wealth of Hindustan were only known to Europeans through the narratives of Marco Polo or Sir John Mandeville—early on the morning of Friday, 12th of October, a man stood bareheaded on the deck of a caraval, and watched the rising sun lighting up the luxuriant tropical vegetation of a level and beautiful island towards which the vessel was gently speeding her way. Three and thirty days had elapsed since the last known point of the Old World, the island of Ferro, had faded away over the high poop of his vessel, eventful weeks during which he had to con-

tend against the natural fears of the ignorant and superstitious men by whom he was surrounded, and by the stratagem of a double reckoning, together with promises of future wealth to allay the murmuring which threatened to frustrate the project that for so many years had been nearest his heart. Never in the darkest hour did the courage of that man quail, or his soul admit a single doubt of success. When the terrified mariners remarked with awe that the needle deviated from the pole-star, their intrepid admiral, by an ingenious theory of his own, explained the cause of the phenomenon, and soothed the alarm that had arisen. When the steady trade-winds were reached, and the vessels flew rapidly for days towards the west, the commander hailed as a godsend the mysterious breeze that his followers regarded with awe, as imposing an insuperable barrier to their return to sunny Spain. When the prow of the caraval was impeded, and her way deadened by the drifting network of the Sargasso Sea, the leader saw therein only assured indications of land, and resolutely shut his ears against those prophets who foresaw evil in every incident.

Now his hopes were fulfilled, the yearnings of a lifetime realized. During the night a light had been seen, and at two o'clock in the morning land

became, beyond all doubt, visible. Then the three little vessels laid to, and with the earliest streak of dawn made sail towards the coast. A man stood bareheaded on the deck of the leading caraval and feasted his eyes upon the wooded shore; the man was Christopher Columbus, the land he gazed on the "West Indies."

And why the "Indies"? Why should not the illustrious navigator have bestowed some other and entirely new appellation on the fresh world that he had discovered? The answer is simple. Columbus was himself unaware that the country he had found was unknown to Europeans. On quitting Spain he had not the slightest intention of bringing to light a new world. Convinced of the spherical form of the earth, and guided by certain facts that during his adventurous career had impressed themselves upon him, Columbus made up his mind that a route to the East Indies could be found by pursuing a westerly course; and when by this means he did discover land, he imagined that it belonged to the eastern extremity of Asia, and so imperfect was science at that time, that the nations of Europe concurred in the opinion, and the islands received the name of the West Indies. This they retained even after the discovery of the vast Pacific Ocean had demonstrated that many thousand miles sepa-

rated the islands from the position assigned to them by Columbus.

The land first touched by the discoverer of the New World was one of the Bahamas, named by the natives Guanahani, but re-christened San Salvador[1] by Columbus, who, landing with much state, fell upon his knees, embraced the earth, and solemnly claimed it as a possession of their Catholic Majesties of Castile and Leon. Into the further discoveries of the great Genoese it is not my intention to enter, but before taking leave of him I am reluctantly compelled to dwell for a few moments upon a traffic then initiated, which, small at first, gradually assumed gigantic proportions, and became a foul blot in the history of the West Indies.

Columbus in each successive voyage brought new land to light. Cuba and Haiti, or Hispaniola, were amongst the earliest discovered; and by the autumn of 1498 the Spaniards had extended their investigations over the whole of those seas, and had ascertained the existence of the American Continent. But only two years after the island of San Salvador had been sighted the admiral took a step which all who admire his character must even regard with sorrow and regret. Isabella was so

[1] Now Watling Island.

priest-ridden that she can hardly be said to have been capable of forming a judgment for herself; her consort, Ferdinand, was a cold, astute, worldly-minded, and unemotional man; the royal coffers were drained, and the sovereigns looked to the New World to refill them. Despatches describing in glowing terms the beauties of the lands he discovered Columbus could send, but word-painting was unable to fill the void in the attenuated exchequer, and the admiral was made aware that some commodity more valuable than parchment was expected by his patrons. What could he send? This is what the great man's historian, Washington Irving, says:—"He remitted by them (the ships) all the gold that he could collect, with specimens of other metals, and of various fruits and valuable plants, which he had collected either in Hispaniola or in the course of his voyage. In his eagerness to produce immediate profit, and to indemnify the sovereigns for those expenses which bore hard upon the royal treasury, he sent, likewise, about five hundred Indian prisoners, who, he suggested, might be sold as slaves at Seville."

This was the commencement of the West Indian slave-trade, and the knowledge that the great navigator originated the abominable traffic in the New World detracts in no small measure from the glory

of an otherwise noble career. The study of his life will show that his last days were embittered by neglect, contumely, and disease, in which some writers see a just retribution for his conduct to the inoffensive Indians.

A few words concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of the West Indies. All accounts agree that the peoples of the Bahamas, of Cuba, and of Haiti were simple, kindly folks, gentle in their dispositions, and artless in their manners. In person they were of moderate stature, well-shaped, of a tawny complexion, and with agreeable features, despite the various coloured pigments that disfigured them ; no hair adorned their faces, and they stared in astonishment at the whiskered Spaniards, touching their beards with mingled curiosity and veneration. From these simple islanders the strangers invariably encountered a most hospitable reception ; when the admiral's ship ran aground they came to his assistance with canoes, removed the valuable lading without pilfering, and conducted themselves so well that Columbus writes to his sovereigns : "So loving, so tractable, so peaceable are these people, that I swear to your majesties there is not in the world a better nation nor a better land. They love their neighbours as themselves ; and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle,

INDIAN BOATS. [Page 9.

(*From an old Print.*)

and accompanied with a smile; and though it is true that they are naked, yet their manners are decorous and praiseworthy." Their only weapons were lances, either pointed with fish-bone or having their ends hardened by fire; and so unused were they to iron that when a drawn sword was presented to them they seized it by the blade, wholly ignorant of its properties. In short, the poor Indians welcomed the bearded strangers, regarding them as a superior race of beings sent down from heaven; the best they had was freely theirs, their balls of trumpery cotton, their tame parrots, their fruits, everything to which they attached any value the simple natives offered as propitiatory gifts to the celestial visitors. Such a race were little adapted to withstand the onslaught of mailed warriors, as the sequel too surely proved.

As the Spaniards founded forts and colonies their lust for gold became awakened, and they commenced to treat the unoffending natives with gross brutality, waste, injury, rapine, and insult following their footsteps in every direction. The wretched Indians had now ceased to regard the white ruffians as heavenly visitors, and, driven to arms by the ill-treatment of their guests, they strove to shake off the yoke which had been silently closing round their necks, but in vain. What could

naked savages armed with pointed sticks do against horsemen in plate-armour, and assisted by such terrible allies as bloodhounds? One small extract will sufficiently answer the question.

"The severities which had terrified Guarionex made Caonabo fiercer. Two hundred infantry, twenty cavalry, and twenty large dogs were sent upon the 24th of March to attack him. On the evening of the 26th they came in sight of 100,000 Indians, under King Mànicatix, in the Vega Real. The admiral commanded one division of the Spaniards, and his brother Bartholomew the other. At the first fire the Indians fled, and the cavalry and dogs made a terrible slaughter; the prisoners were condemned to slavery."[2]

Yes, such was the return that Columbus made for the kindness with which these poor creatures had welcomed him; and when I say that the admiral was a just, a merciful, and a humane man, compared to his associates and those that came after him, the reader will be enabled to form some idea of the miseries to which this unoffending and unhappy race were subjected; and, be it remembered, subjected by men who had no earthly claim on the soil. The Spaniards found the West Indies peopled by harmless communities, who

[2] Southey's "West Indies."

obeyed the laws of their chiefs, and lived in such peace that a raid from the fierce Carribs was the only danger that threatened them. The Spaniard came and proved an enemy more terrible ten thousand-fold than the dreaded Carribs. Spanish lust and love for gold swallowed up the wretched aborigines as though the sword of the Destroying Angel had passed through the land.

I purposely omit any details of the shocking cruelties perpetrated by the conquerors against these people. Small need to wonder that the perusal of such facts caused the blood to boil in the veins of Drake, of Hawkins, of many an old Elizabethan sea-dog as he listened to the history of Spanish deeds in the Spanish Main. Even now, although more than three centuries have elapsed since Las Casas—himself a Spaniard—wrote, no Englishman, nay, no Christian, can read his book without wrath at the heart, though the tear of pity may dim the eye. By fire, by sword, by inexpressible torments, by revolting tortures were these unhappy people exterminated. Hear what the Bishop of Chiapas—a prelate bold enough to raise his voice in denunciation of such tyranny—writes:—

"To these quiet lambs"—he has been describing the Indians—"endued with such blessed qualities,

came the *Spaniards* like most cruel Tygres, Wolves, and Lions, enraged with a sharp and tedious hunger; for these forty years past, minding nothing else but the slaughter of these unfortunate wretches, whom with divers kinds of torments, neither seen nor heard of before, they have so cruelly and inhumanely butchered; that of 3,000,000 of people which *Hispaniola* itself did contain, there are left remaining alive scarce 300 persons. And for the Island of *Cuba*, which contains as much ground in length as from *Valladolid* to *Rome*, it lies wholly desert, untill'd, and ruin'd. The Islands of *St. John* and *Jamaica* lie waste and desolate. The *Lucayan* Islands, neighbouring towards the North upon *Cuba* and *Hispaniola*, being above Sixty or thereabouts—with those Islands that are vulgarly called the Islands of the Gyants, of which that which is least fertile is more fruitful than the King of *Spain's* garden at *Sevil*, being situate in a pure and temperate air, are now totally unpeopled and destroyed, the inhabitants thereof, amounting to above 500,000 souls, partly killed and partly forced away to work in other places; so that there going a ship to visit those parts, and to glean the remainder of those distressed wretches, there could be found no more than eleven men. Other Islands there were near the Island of *St. John*, more than

thirty in number, which were totally made desert; all which Islands, though they amount to such a number, containing in length of ground the space of above Two thousand miles, lie now altogether solitary, without any people or inhabitants. . . .

Suicides. (*Benzoni.*)

And we dare confidently aver that for those forty years, wherein the *Spaniards* exercised their abominable cruelties and detestable tyrannies in those parts, that there have innocently perished above Twelve millions of souls, women and children being

numbered in this sad and fatal list. Moreover, I do verily believe that I should speak within the compass should I say that above Fifty millions were consumed in this Massacre."

The foregoing sufficiently explains what became of the aboriginal inhabitants—the mild peaceable race that Columbus found; within fifty years his countrymen had exterminated them. And now also we are able to account for the negro race that at present peoples the island. Finding that the Indians were perishing beneath the yoke of their cruel taskmasters, and that their frames were wholly unable to support the arduous labour in the mines, Las Casas, the avowed champion of the fast-disappearing race, hit upon a plan whereby he hoped that their fate would for some time longer be averted. Having noticed that beneath the fierce sun of Hispaniola the African remained sleek and robust, he proposed the introduction of negroes to relieve the natives in their heavy work of the gold-mines and sugar-plantations. The plan was tried, and found to succeed admirably, the sturdy African suffering no injury, where the weaker Indian broke down and perished. The scheme answered, but certainly not in the way that its benevolent originator intended. The commerical value of the new system was immediately recognized by the colo-

nists—many of them the sweepings of the Spanish jails—and by their friends in the mother country, when, to his intense disappointment and regret, Las Casas saw a lucrative trade in negroes established, and recognized too late that he had unwittingly condemned another race to the miseries of enforced servitude. In that painful position the African slaves prospered and increased, whilst the aboriginals as a race disappeared, and beyond the foregoing brief account they will not figure again in the pages of this volume.

I have now explained in what manner the West Indies were discovered; what description of people inhabited the islands; how they fell beneath the Spanish yoke, and ultimately disappeared beneath its grievous burden; and how two eminent men were instrumental in founding the system of slavery. This being accomplished as briefly as possible, let us, in the next chapter, make ourselves a little more fully acquainted with the geographical and physical features of the portion of the globe towards which we are directing our attention.

CHAPTER II.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL FEATURES.

By the term "West Indies" is understood that curved chain of islands which, extending from the Florida shore in North America to the Gulf of Venezuela in South America, separates the Atlantic Ocean from the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico.

As I have pointed out, this archipelago received the name of the West Indies from its discoverer; but although this is the title by which it is now most familiar to us, two other names for the chain are made use of by geographers—the Columbian Archipelago and the Antilles. In addition to this the seamen of different nations have divided the islands into different groups, and bestowed various names upon each, so that the reader is very apt to become puzzled, more particularly if his book dates before the middle of the eighteenth century. The old Spanish navigators, in speaking of the West

Indies, distinguished the islands by the terms *Barlovento* and *Sotavento*, from whence our *Windward* and *Leeward* Islands. But inasmuch as the English and Spanish mariners bestowed these appellations upon *different* groups, much confusion occurred, owing to the double nomenclature. To avoid all unnecessary difficulty, therefore, I shall divide the islands into the groups, and give such groups the names assigned to them by modern geographers.

Separated from the Coast of Florida by the strait of the same name, and extending in a south-easterly direction as far as lat. 20 N., lies an innumerable chain of islands, islets, or cays and rocks, only some twenty of which are inhabited. These are the BAHAMAS or LUCAYOS.

To the south of the Bahamas, but extending much farther east and west, are found four islands, two of which are of great size; these are Cuba, San Domingo or Haiti (the Hispaniola of Columbus), Puerto Rico, and Jamaica; and upon them geographers have bestowed the appellation of THE GREATER ANTILLES.

Commencing to the eastward of Puerto Rico, and extending thence in a horseshoe to the Gulf of Venezuela, are found a continuous chain of islands which separate the Atlantic Ocean from the

Caribbean Sea; these are known as THE LESSER ANTILLES or CARIBBEE ISLANDS. But these terms being too general for such a stretch of land, they have been subdivided into two groups—the *Leeward* and *Windward Isles*. The former comprises the islands lying between Puerto Rico and Martinique, the principal of which are the Virgin Isles, Anguilla, St. Bartholomew, Barbuda, St. Christopher (St. Kitts), Nevis, Antigua, Montserrat, Guadaloupe, Marie Galante, and Dominica. The *Windward Isles* consist of the islands lying south of the 15th parallel of north latitude, the most important of which are Martinique, St. Lucia, Barbadoes, St. Vincent, Grenada, Tobago, and Trinidad. The islands stretching along the coast of Venezuela also belong, strictly speaking, to this subdivision.

The West Indian archipelago extends from 10° to 27° 30′ N. lat., and from 59° to 85° W. longitude, with an estimated gross area of 86,023 square miles. The following table will greatly assist in showing the various nationalities to whom the islands belong:—

Name of island.	Area in square miles.	When first occupied.	By what people.	To whom belonging.
Jamaica and the Caymannas . . .	6400	1509	Spaniards	Great Britain
The Bahamas . .	5500	1620	English	,,
Virgin Islands (Tortola, &c..) . . .	57	1648	Dutch Buccaneers	,,
Trinidad . . .	1754½	1535	Spaniards	,,
Tobago . . .	114	1632	Dutch	,,
Grenada and Grenadines . . .	133	1650	French	,,
St. Vincent's . .	147	1719	,,	,,
Barbadoes . . .	166	1625	English	,,
St. Lucia . . .	237	1639	,,	,,
Dominica . . .	291	1610	French	,,
Antigua . . .	93	1632	English	,,
Montserrat . . .	78	1632	,,	,,
Barbuda . . .	90	—	,,	,,
Nevis and Redonda .	20	—	,,	,,
St. Kitts or Christopher's	63	1623	,,	,,
Anguilla . . .	30	1640	,,	,,
Cuba and I. de Piños	64000	1511	Spaniards	Spain
Puerto Rico . . .	4140	1509	,,	,,
Martinique . . .	381	1635	French	France
Guadaloupe . . Deseada . . Marie Galante .	625	1635	,,	,,
St. Bartholomew . .	35	—	—	,,
St. Thomas . . .	35	1671	Danes	Denmark
St. John's . . .	40	—	,,	,,
St. Croix . . .	84	1643	Dutch	,,
St. Martin . . .	90	—	—	Netherlands
St. Eustatia . . .	22	—	—	,,
Saba	10	—	—	,,
Curaçoa . . .	164	—	—	,,
Margarita, Tortuga, &c.	354	—	—	Venezuela
St. Domingo—Haiti .	28030	1493	Spaniards	Independent

Let us now proceed to examine briefly the physical features of the various groups. The islands of the Bahamas are scattered about over a vast bank, which rises almost perpendicularly from an unfathomable depth. Built by the indefatigable industry of the madrepores, or coral insects, they

rarely attain any great height above the water, whilst in form they are commonly long and narrow. The soil of these unattractive patches is composed of sand intermixed with shells, hard at the surface, and clothed with dwarf trees or shrubs, from some of which dyes are extracted. The whole group bears evidence of its coralline origin. The great Bahama Bank, on which many of the islands are situated, occupies no less an extent than 300 miles in length by 80 in breadth. At the very edge of this, where it arises from the depths of the ocean, not more than five fathoms of water can be found, which decreases to a few feet at the centre of the bank.

A large portion of the island of Cuba rests on a shoal similar to the Great Bahama Bank, but towards the south-east the geological features present a new aspect, and mountains rise to the height of 7200 feet above the sea. Granite enters into the composition of these, together with calcareous rocks of varied kinds and qualities. Carboniferous strata are found at the west end of the island, and schistose rocks occur on the northern coast.

Advancing east from Cuba to Haiti we arrive at lofty mountains, of which limestone appears to be the prevalent formation, although schistose and

quartz rocks occur frequently. A remarkable geological feature in this island is the appearance of insulated limestone hillocks, undermined by the sea and perforated by enormous caverns. To these I shall revert when treating of Haiti at length.

In Puerto Rico the mountains show a considerable decrease in altitude, although their formation is similar to that of Haiti; in the Virgin Isles they are less than 2000 feet in height, and in Virgin Gorda, where they end, this chain is less than 500 feet in altitude. Geological research leads us to believe that although the Antilles form a sort of broken bridge between the northern and southern continents of America, the date of their isolation must have been very remote, and the absence of many animals, common to the mainland, would tend to support this theory.

The next island to the eastward of Virgin Gorda is Anguilla, and the strait between these may be said to form the boundary of the volcanic region, which extends (roughly) from 18° to 12° N. lat., and from 61° to 63° W. long., embracing, in short, the principal islands of the Windward and Leeward groups. Neither in Anguilla nor in Barbadoes are traces of volcanic action to be found; but the remaining islands are chiefly composed of larva; many of them contain extinct craters, while

Guadaloupe and St. Vincent have each an active volcano. It is generally the case where subterranean agencies have been at work, the surface of these islands is very irregular and broken, mountains rising abruptly from 2000 to 5000 feet above the level of the sea. On the east side of the chain, the portion exposed to the sweeping tides of the Atlantic, the rocks tower almost perpendicularly from the sea, forming no indentations that offer a refuge to the mariner, who must seek shelter from the hurricane on the western coast, where the slope towards the sea is much more gentle.

From the above it will be seen that three geological formations exist in the West Indies, the coralline, the granitic, and the volcanic, none of which have anything of marked peculiarity about them.

Let us now turn to the climate of the West Indies, which may be generally described as tropical, the whole of the islands, with the exception of the Northern Bahamas, lying within the torrid zone.

It is customary to divide the tropical year into two epochs only, the *wet* and the *dry;* but this is doing the weather an injustice, for it is just as capable of subdivision into four seasons as in more temperate latitudes.

About the month of April spring may be said to commence; then the trees put forth fresh foliage, the plains and swamps become bright with tender green, and under the influence of the passing showers a rich mantle of verdure covers the whole land. This may be called the short wet season, and lasts from fifteen to forty days, according to the locality and physical conditions of the island; after which the weather becomes settled and beautiful, although very hot, for the sun is sailing in the zenith, and the summer, or short dry season has commenced. Without the land and the sea breezes the heat of this period would be insupportable, and the short calms that exist between them are the most uncomfortable time of the day. At this season the thermometer varies but little, usually marking about eighty, and the nights are distinguished for the clearness of the heavens, the serenity of the air, and the greater radiance that all heavenly bodies emit; the planet Venus, in the absence of the moon, casting a shade from trees and buildings.

But about July a change occurs, the welcome breezes now frequently fail to appear, the thermometer mounts upwards, and the atmosphere becomes suffocating, whilst huge clouds are observed banking up in the east and south-east; this

heralds the approach of the autumn or long rainy season.

Throughout July the heat continues and the thunder may be heard growling sullenly in the distance, but no relief comes until at length the heavens are opened, and the rain descends in a perfect torrent, that requires to be witnessed in order to be fully appreciated. It is now that the fearful hurricanes, which, sweeping over the deep, wreck whole islands, may be expected, and the inhabitants are thankful when December appears, bringing with it northerly and north-easterly winds, which drive before them heavy showers of hail and clear the heated air. At first these blow fitfully, but gradually they settle down into the welcome trade-wind, and now succeeds the winter. A very parody of winter as we understand it, a cool and delightful season, likened by one author to "the climates of Paradise." This is the long dry season, and continues until the month of April.

Besides the hurricanes the inhabitants of the West Indies have another enemy to dread in the earthquakes, which occasionally commit havoc amongst the islands, proving particularly destructive in those of volcanic formation.

Having now, I trust, given the reader some

general notion of the geographical position, physical features, and climate of the West Indies, I shall lay before him a sketch of the several islands, not in exact accordance with their position, but grouped under the various nationalities to which they belong; and with this end in view, I shall first treat of the British possessions in that quarter.

CHAPTER III.

THE BAHAMAS OR LUCAYOS, AND THE BUCCANEERS.

By the Bahamas we understand a group of islands, varying in size and altitude, which, stretching from the eastern coast of Florida to the northern portion of Haiti—a distance of some 600 miles—encircles and encloses the gulf of Mexico. The Bahamas are situated between 20° and 27° 40′ N. lat., and 68° 40′ and 79° 20′ W. long.

In the previous chapter I have spoken of this group as only slightly raised above the level of the sea, and the description is correct where applied to the islands as a whole, but some of them attain a height of from 100 to 400 feet, and on these timber of a tolerable size is found. According to the most recent surveys the total number of islands is 29, of cays 660, whilst no less than 2387 rocks are known.

The principal islands are Great and Little

PARASITES—WEST INDIAN SCENERY.

[*Page* 24.

Abaco, New Providence, on which is situated Nassau, the capital of the group; Eleuthera, Andros, Exuma, Long Island, Watling Island (the San Salvador of Columbus), Acklin Island, Marignana, and Inagua. The Caicos and Turk's Island also belong geographically to the Bahamas, but they are attached politically to the Government of Jamaica. All the larger islands are inhabited, and the total population at the last census was 39,162.

The soil being light and strong, little verdure clothes the Bahamas, but the group produces fruit unequalled throughout the world, amongst which I may mention oranges, citrons, limes, bananas, tamarinds, olives, pineapples, pomegranates, figs, and melons; whilst potatoes, yams, cucumbers pepper, coffee, sugar-cane, Indian corn, and peas, abundantly supply the wants of the inhabitants. Cotton is indigenous to these islands, and at one time formed a valuable article of commerce, but its cultivation is now discontinued. On only one single island—Andros—is running water to be found; in all the others the inhabitants are entirely dependent upon wells, and upon the rain-water collected from the roofs of the houses, for their supply.

As may be imagined, by far the greater portion

of the population of the Bahamas are coloured, free negroes, the descendants generally of African slaves. Their soil giving them food in abundance, they indulge in the idle habits of their race, and pass away the greater portion of the time in basking beneath the rays of the sun. The seas around them literally teem with fish, the capture of which is attended with little trouble, and many of the inhabitants ostensibly follow the calling of fishermen. But a richer prey than the finny denizens of the deep frequently rewards the boatmen of the Bahamas. Owing to the intricacy of the passages surrounding their islands, hardly a week elapses without some imprudent mariner entangling his ship in their windings. Then the Bahamas wreckers put forth in their fast-sailing schooners, and by their skill and dexterity often enable the imprisoned vessel to avoid the cruel coral rocks; or, if too late to prevent a catastrophe, rescue the crew and most frequently the majority of the cargo through their skill in diving. And let it not be imagined that any opprobrium is attached to the term "wrecker," for in the Bahamas it is as well recognized a trade as any other, being under strict regulations imposed by the colonial legislature, whereby the salvors obtain a certain fixed percentage for life and property saved. Formerly it

was not so, and tradition has handed us down stories that make the listener's blood run cold. Then, in the good old days, if the fishermen of the Bahamas saved life, they lost all claim for remuneration on the ship, and consequently it was highly disadvantageous to them that any human being should be found alive upon a stranded vessel. What this meant needs no explanation; the coast was desolate, the fishermen both rapacious and lawless; and, as a matter of fact, the number of shipwrecked men brought to Nassau in proportion to the cargoes recovered was exceedingly small. This, however, is now gone by; and if local knowledge and skill can avail him in the time of difficulty, the perplexed skipper will find both amongst the 'long-shore inhabitants of the Bahamas.

Agriculture affords an occupation for the inhabitants of the largest islands, whilst the collection of sponges, and the raking of salt finds employment for others; the latter industry, however, although formerly of considerable dimensions, particularly on Turk's Island, has received a death-blow, owing to the heavy duty on salt now levied by the United States. Cattle, introduced from Europe, thrive in the Bahamas, but the rearing of stock has never claimed much attention, the islanders supplying themselves with beef and mutton from

the United States, Canada, and Cuba. Of indigenous animals it may be said that there are none, but the feathered tribes are well represented, many of their members possessing plumage of extreme brilliancy, as the flamingo, several species of humming-bird, &c.

New Providence owes its importance as the seat of government entirely to the fact of its possessing a harbour, in which a few vessels of fifteen feet draught may find a safe anchorage.[1] The island is oval-shaped, sixteen and a half miles long, east and west, and six and a half miles at its broadest part. A narrow ridge of wooded hills from eighty to 120 feet high, skirts the northern shore almost the whole way, and on the northern slope of the ridge, about five and a half miles from the east end of the island, stands the picturesque and well-built little town of Nassau, which possesses facilities for heaving down and repairing damaged vessels, and can supply them with provisions and other necessaries in abundance. At a spot called Cave Point, about six and a half miles from the western extremity of the island, a narrow fork of the ridge, called the Blue Hills, averaging about 120 feet in height, branches off inland, and north and south of it are large lakes of brackish water,

[1] "The West India Pilot," by Capt. E. Barnett, R.N.

from ten to twelve feet deep, which are slightly influenced by the tides. Most of the fresh-water wells throughout the Bahamas rise and fall with the tide, a curious circumstance that is worthy of remark. The town of Nassau is chiefly constructed of stone, supplied by the island itself. The coralline limestone, although of extreme hardness at the surface, softens at a small depth, and can be readily sawn into blocks, which become hard on exposure to the atmosphere, and form an admirable building material.

Andros, perhaps the largest of the Bahamas, is a low swampy island, about ninety miles in length by forty in breadth, thickly wooded, and intersected by numerous shallow creeks, which at high water almost divide it into three parts. It contains no harbour whatever, but boats of very light draught find their way to the reefs that fringe its eastern side, and there collect sponges, or ship the wood which is floated down from the lagoons. This large island, with an area of over 1600 square miles, contains little more than 1000 inhabitants.

San Salvador, or Watling's Island, is about twelve miles in length by six in breadth, having its interior largely cut up by salt-water lagoons, separated from each other by low woody hills. Being one of the most fertile of the group, it maintains

nearly 2000 inhabitants, who are scattered about over its surface. Peculiar interest will always attach itself to this spot, as being the first land on which the discoverer of the New World set foot.

None of the other islands merit any particular description. Their climate is equable, and many Americans suffering from pulmonary disease resort to Nassau, and derive decided benefit therefrom. Destructive hurricanes occasionally visit the group. In 1866 New Providence was greatly injured by a visitation of this nature, which uprooted the fruit-trees, damaged the sponges, and committed much havoc. The capital of the Bahamas enjoyed a period of abnormal prosperity during the civil war in the United States, when the blockade-runners resorted to its port, but with the suppression of the rebellion this harvest came to an end.

The history of this group is very singular, for its annals bring us into contact with some of the most lawless members of the human race—the free-booters or pirates, who infested its cays and havens. I have already mentioned how the Spaniards desolated the islands, transporting the miserable Indians to a living death in the mines of Mexico. Within half a century of their discovery by Columbus not a native remained, and the Bahamas continued uninhabited until 1629, when the English formed a

settlement at New Providence, but being forcibly expelled by the jealous Spaniards in 1641, the islands were again deserted until 1666, when the British re-colonized them, but were again driven out in 1703. The group now became the head-quarters of the desperadoes of all nations—blood-thirsty pirates, who, infesting the numerous cays, bore down upon the peaceful trading-vessels, and committed every species of cruelty and excess. Despairing of repressing the marauders by any other means, the British government resettled New Providence, placing a stout naval officer—Captain Woodes Rogers—at the head of affairs; and having a good force at his command, that officer soon made piracy more dangerous than lucrative; many of the most prominent freebooters were captured and executed, others agreed to abandon their lawless life, and in due course several more islands were colonized. During the American War of Independence New Providence was attacked and plundered, and in 1781 capitulated to the Spaniard; but after being most gallantly recaptured by Colonel Devereux, was confirmed to England at the peace of 1783.

As no account of the West Indies, however brief, would be complete without some mention of the buccaneers, the earlier history of those islands being

intimately connected with their achievements and depredations, I think no more fitting place can be found for a sketch of these lawless people than the present, when the reader has just gained some little insight into the tortuous seas which they loved to infest.

The seventeenth century gave birth to a class of rovers wholly distinct from any of their predecessors in the annals of the world, differing as widely in their plans, organization, and exploits as in the principles that governed their actions. The Cilician pirates destroyed by Pompey, and the wild northern Vikings, attacked and captured vessels from cupidity only; far nobler objects actuated the men whom I propose to describe, although it would be absurd to say that the love of gain was absent from their projects.

To Spain is attributable the origin of the freebooters of the Spanish Main. The seizure of the West Indies by that nation, and the monopoly that she claimed on the adjoining continent, awoke the jealousy of the other powers, who beheld with amazement and envy the wealth of the New World pouring into the Spanish Treasury. This jealousy caused them to view with no disfavour the efforts of a few lawless men to divert the stream of wealth, careless of the means employed by these people to

gain their ends. Hence it must not be matter for wonder that the freebooters were generally found armed with letters of marque from one or other of the powers, which gave a semi-legitimate aspect to their daring enterprises. In short, Spain had drawn upon herself the hatred and aroused the cupidity of all Europe, whose rulers gladly winked at any enormity as long as it tended to cripple or diminish the resources of a formidable rival. I may add that a great indignation reigned throughout the civilized world at the cruel treatment of the Indians and the atrocities perpetrated in Mexico and Peru. These had gradually been noised abroad, and men's blood was set aflame by the dire recital. Deep personal hatred to the Spaniards must not be overlooked as a factor in the desperate undertakings of the western rovers.

After the native inhabitants of Haiti had been exterminated, and the Spaniards had sailed farther west, a few adventurous men from Normandy settled on the shores of the island, for the purpose of hunting the wild bulls and hogs which roamed at will through the forests. The small island of Tortugas was their market; thither they repaired with their salted and smoked meat, their hides, &c., and disposed of them in exchange for powder, lead, and other necessaries. The places where these

semi-wild hunters prepared the slaughtered carcases were called *boucans*, and they themselves became known as *Buccaneers*.

Probably the world has never before or since witnessed such an extraordinary association as theirs. Unburdened by women-folk or children,

A BOUCAN.

these men lived in couples, reciprocally rendering each other services, and having entire community of property—a condition termed by them *matelotage*, from the word *matelot*, by which they addressed one another. Did a buccaneer die, his comrade inherited every single thing he possessed; did a

buccaneer want for anything, he took it as a right from his nearest neighbour who was blessed with a superfluity of the desired article. The expressions *mine* and *thine* were unknown amongst them ; bolts or bars to windows and doors were rigorously for-

A BUCCANEER.

bidden ; all disputes were amicably settled by the intervention of friends ; they acknowledged no laws but such as had been concluded amongst themselves, meeting any attempt at innovation by the simple remark, "It is not the custom on the coast."

More than this, a man on joining the fraternity completely merged his identity. Each member received a nickname, and no attempt was ever made to inquire into his antecedents. When one of their number married, he ceased to be a buccaneer, having forfeited his membership by so civilized a proceeding. He might continue to dwell on the coast, and to hunt cattle, but he was no longer a *matelot*—as a Benedick he had degenerated to a *colonist.*

The apparel of these singular men was as simple and rude as their customs, consisting only of shirt and pantaloons manufactured from coarse linen cloth, steeped in the blood of wild cattle. Their feet were innocent of stockings, but protected by pigskin boots, the same animal supplying a round cap as a covering for the head. A green hide belt encircled their waists, containing a *couteau-de-chasse* and several knives; each man carried a long firelock, loaded with a brace of ounce balls, and on a hunting expedition was attended by one or more negro slaves, and by a strong pack of fierce but well-trained dogs.

Such was the buccaneer, in the original meaning of the word—a being little removed from a savage, who lived amidst dirt and filth, yet had a good appetite withal, and most excellent health. That

men should voluntarily embrace such a career seems inexplicable, but it is recorded that several amongst them relinquished good inheritances awaiting them in Europe rather than give up the freedom of the coast.

Uncouth and lawless though the buccaneers were, the sinister signification now attaching to their name would never have been merited had it not been for the unreasoning jealousy of the Spaniards. The hunters were actually a source of profit to that nation, yet from an insane antipathy to strangers the dominant race resolved on exterminating the settlers. Attacked whilst dispersed in pursuance of their avocations, the latter fell easy victims; many of them were wantonly massacred, others dragged into slavery.

But the buccaneers were of different mould from the wretched Indians who had fallen beneath the invaders' arquebusses, and in place of instilling terror, this unprovoked assault roused the fierce passions of the survivors. Banding together in small detachments, they were ever prepared for defence; and when the Spaniards attacked stood their ground firmly like valiant men, and put the soldiers to flight on every occasion, despite the numerical superiority of the latter.

After losing many men the Spaniards adopted a

new method, and attacked the habitations of the buccaneers by night, slaying without mercy all that fell into their hands. Breathing hatred and vengeance, "the brethren of the coast" united their scattered forces, and a war of horrible reprisals commenced. Fresh troops arrived from Spain, whilst the ranks of the buccaneers were filled by adventurers of all nations, allured by love of plunder, and fired with indignation at the cruelties of the aggressors.

So the conflict continued until 1663, when Spain resolved on overwhelming all opposition, and sent a body of trained men, under Van Delmof, a veteran officer, to destroy the stubborn colonists. Van Delmof resolved on attacking the buccaneer headquarters at Savanna (Haiti), and marched secretly for that purpose with 500 well-armed Europeans. The hunters heard of the project; and though only numbering 100 men, they advanced to meet the enemy, and after a stubborn and bloody battle drove the latter into the sea, with the loss of their general and many men.

After this decisive victory the buccaneers hoped that the relentless foe would permit them to pursue their avocations in peace, but it was not to be. The Spaniards surprised detached parties, and to avoid this the hunters withdrew from Haiti

to the small islands in its neighbourhood, and only visited the mainland for the chase. But even here the Spaniards followed them, butchering parties of two or three, but invariably being worsted when they numbered less than ten to one. The struggle became sickening from the bloody reprisals on both sides; but the Spaniards, utterly failing to oust their opponents, hit upon a new expedient, so short-sighted that it reflects but little credit on their statesmanship. This was the extermination of the horned cattle, by which the buccaneers derived their means of subsistence; a general slaughter took place, and the breed was almost extirpated.

A small share of worldly wisdom would have pointed out to the government the folly of driving such a class of men as the hunters to extremity; but the puffed-up arrogance of the Spaniard was curbed by no prudential consideration; calling upon every saint in his calendar, and raining curses on the heretical buccaneers, he deprived them of their legitimate occupation, and created wilfully a set of desperate enemies who harassed the colonial trade of an empire, already betraying signs of feebleness, with the pertinacity of wolves, and who only desisted when her commerce had been reduced to insignificance.

Scorning all mercantile or agricultural pursuits, accustomed to a life of danger and privation, devoured by an undying hatred of their assailants, the buccaneers developed into a new association—the freebooters.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FREEBOOTERS OF THE SPANISH MAIN.

UNTIL the year 1665 the Spaniards had claimed the entire control over Haiti, but at that date the French appointed Mons. Ogeron as governor, thereby asserting their right to a country whose fertility and importance its original conquerors had failed to perceive. A short time before (1659), a French gentleman, named Rausset, had settled on the island of Tortugas, which from that period became the favourite resort of the buccaneers and freebooters, although it was a miserable spot, destitute of every resource. These men mustered about 3000 strong when Ogeron appeared in 1665—wild, lawless people, styling themselves "Brethren of the Coast," aspiring to perfect independence, animated by a detestation of the Spaniards, but equally prepared to welcome the French, provided the latter power did not attempt to curtail their notions of liberty. That Ogeron had a task of

much difficulty before him, in endeavouring to sway these intractable spirits, may be well imagined; but by firmness and tact he partly succeeded, gaining a considerable ascendancy over them, softening their manners, making their reckless bravery useful to his own government, and proving himself possessed of much administrative ability. Amongst other expedients to turn rovers into colonists, he imported shiploads of attractive young women from France, who at once found consorts amongst the Brethren of the Coast, and by example imparted to their wild partners a delicacy hitherto unknown amongst them. It was at this period that buccaneers and freebooters were merged into one association. Let me describe how the latter class of men first arose.

The wild Haiti hunters, although their wants were few, still stood in need of certain articles that could only be procured from abroad, and often at great cost and inconvenience. To render themselves independent of every one, some of their number, to whom hunting proved uncongenial, took to the sea, and brought over in canoes whatever their comrades lacked. At first their goods were obtained by legitimate barter; but when no opening for traffic offered, sooner than return empty they laid violent hands on whatever suited them; and

as this proved a simple plan, requiring no abstruse calculation, and unattended by much trouble, it found such favour in their eyes as eventually to become a regular practice. Thus it will be seen that the original buccaneers consisted of three classes—the hunters; the colonists or inhabitants, who sometimes cultivated a small strip of land; and freebooters, whose occupation was at first barter, but ere long became sheer piracy.

Few in number at first, the ranks of the freebooters were speedily swollen by the buccaneers, and by recruits from every nation in Europe, save one—no Spaniard was admitted into the association. Their lawless occupation, and the element upon which they plied it, possessed infinite attractions for the restless adventurers, mariners, and perturbed spirits of the old world, who gravitated towards the West Indies, eager to ransack the golden treasures of the deeply laden galleons.

France, despite the remonstrances of Spain, provided the freebooters with letters of marque, which imparted a semblance of legality to their deeds. These she did not hesitate to disavow openly, but took good care that the hollowness of her remonstrances was apparent to the pirates. Constantly at war, it was a great advantage to France to have a body of intrepid men crippling her enemies in

the West Indies, who required no pay, but actually contributed to the treasury, for it had been formally decreed by the French admiralty that one-tenth of all plunder should be handed to their representative in the Spanish Main. Many Frenchmen settled on the shores of Haiti, and piracy became a thriving trade, the colonists procuring small vessels and cruising in concert with the freebooters. But although flying the French flag, the marauders yielded that country no allegiance, and before long we find them committing their depredations under the banner of St. George. Once possessed of a letter of marque—whether English, French, or Portuguese was matter of indifference — these people thought themselves at perfect liberty to attack the Spaniard whenever and wherever they met him, utterly heedless whether the nation they professed to follow was at peace with that country or not.

But before entering upon the exploits of these rovers, let us glance at their manners and mode of living. A profession of absolute freedom was the leading tenet of their code, and when not engaged in actual service each member claimed the privilege of doing any single thing that his inclination prompted. If a man in an open boat felt disposed sing or dance, he proceeded forthwith to indulge

his humour, careless of the fact that he disturbed his sleeping comrades, and no one ventured to remonstrate, or to interfere in any way. The object of this was to try the patience of the brotherhood, and accustom them to restrain their passions. Their fidelity to each other was most remarkable, and the smallest violation of the principle was punished by expulsion from the association, by deprivation of all property, and by exposure unarmed on a desert island, where the traitor perished miserably from hunger. This discipline made them patient and uncomplaining under the most trying circumstances, and no hardships could wring a murmur from their lips. Their determinations were rash; but, once made, unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Enterprises were proposed without the smallest forethought; but the members having agreed, they never shrank from carrying them out, however formidable the obstacles that stood in the way of success. "Resolve first, decide the means afterwards," was their motto, and by reckless daring they in most instances carried the day.

When the society first started they were provided with wretched canoes or skiffs only. In these they huddled together, exposed to the burning sun, to the blinding torrents of rain, to ceaseless labour at

the oar, to the pangs of hunger, to the greater torment of a devouring thirst. A Spanish ship hove in sight, and they made for her, regardless of her size and armament. Death could only prove a release from the misery of their condition, and they feared no disparity of force. Playing at long balls with fire-arms little suited their impetuous natures. Knives and hangers were loosened in their sheaths, a dozen brawny arms plied the oars, the helmsman directed the boat's course, and silent as the grave they dashed upon the foe. Like cats they swarmed up the side of the vessel that they already regarded as their prey, and once on board nothing could withstand the ferocity of their onslaught. Such was the terror inspired by the freebooters, that few crews at last offered any resistance, seeking to deprecate the wrath of their assailants by a speedy surrender.

Then the pirates reimbursed themselves for all former sufferings. The prize was carried to the Tortugas, her cargo sold, and the spoil divided. Each rover then ruffled it in silk, satin, and velvet, flinging away his gold with the same recklessness that had assisted him in gaining it. Debauchery, drunkenness, dancing, and revelry, wore away the days until the booty was exhausted; then the

rovers slept themselves sober, and started forth in quest of another victim.

Yet, depraved as they were, the freebooters made a great profession of religion, which was in some of their number doubtless real. They prayed fervently on all occasions, and never commenced a meal without a long grace. Before going into action they humbly besought God to grant them the victory, after which the Catholics sung the *Magnificat*, and the Protestants repeated a hymn.

This outward devoutness, so entirely at variance with their practices, admits of some explanation and must be regarded with reference to the century in which the freebooters flourished. The conduct of the Spaniards in America, and their iniquitous proceedings in the Low Countries, had created in many men the idea that to war upon that nation was simply to vindicate the wrongs of outraged humanity; and under this impression people who were neither licentious nor actuated by a love of plunder joined the freebooters as the readiest means of punishing the Spaniards. One notable instance of this may be mentioned. A young gentleman of Languedoc, named Montbars, whilst still at college, read the narrative of Las Casas, portraying the sufferings of the Indians, and became so indignant at the cruelties recorded therein that he swore to

avenge them, and immediately on attaining his majority dedicated the whole of his patrimony to fitting out a ship, with which he joined the freebooters. Governed solely by a relentless hatred, he pursued his object without thought of plunder, and from his bravery, both on shore and at sea, became distinguished even amongst the daring rovers. To the Spaniards he was a scourge before whose very name they quailed; no one of that nation found in arms did he spare; and far and wide over the Caribbean Sea he was known by the ominous *soubriquet* of "the Destroyer."

Many of the freebooters were actuated by similar motives, at all events, in the outset of their career; they scouted the imputation that cupidity was the mainspring of their actions, founding their right to attack Spanish vessels upon the ground that permission to fish and hunt in the West Indies was derived through the avarice of a nation, who themselves made no use of the very things that they prevented others from enjoying.

I should extend this sketch to too great a length did I describe the rules and ordinances observed by the freebooters when afloat; suffice it to say that these were of the strictest nature, and their infraction visited by heavy penalties. I now proceed to narrate some of the achievements of these

singular men, who rendered themselves formidable to all Spanish America.

Shortly after the middle of the seventeenth century the rovers of England, of the Netherlands, of Portugal, and of France, mustered in such force in the West Indies as to completely paralyze the Spanish trade. The latter had their enormous colonies, but not a ship belonging to them could show her pendant out of port without finding a fast-sailing pirate bearing down upon her beam. Disgusted at this, and being wholly unable to suppress it in any other fashion, Spain sought to baffle the marauders by entirely relinquishing for a space the navigation of those seas—a notable project, which bore exactly similar fruit to the slaughter of the cattle by which the buccaneers gained their subsistence. Unable to find plunder on the high seas, the freebooters were not long in resolving to seek it on land.

An Englishman, one Lewis Scott, was the first to conceive and execute this brilliant idea. Appearing suddenly at the city of San Francisco, Campeachy, he first pillaged it, and then exacted a heavy ransom from the astonished inhabitants. John Davis, of Jamaica, with only 190 men, next made a successful and most audacious raid upon Nicaragua. Leaving but ten of his companions to

guard the ship, he distributed the remainder in three canoes, and during the darkness of night paddled up the river on which the city stands. A sentinel hailed, but being answered in Spanish took no further notice, and the rovers landing, proceeded to pillage both dwellings and churches, retiring to their boats before the troops could assemble to attack them. Their booty in silver and precious stones was estimated at 8000*l.*

Olonois, a native of Sable d'Olonne, having lost his ship and narrowly escaped from the Spaniards with his life, managed to arm two small vessels with twenty-one men, and started off to pillage the city of Los Cayos, in Cuba. Apprised of his intentions, the governor of Havanna despatched a six-gun frigate, manned by ninety men, to the assistance of the inhabitants. Four other smaller ships were also ordered to join the frigate, so that Olonois found unexpected difficulties in the path he had marked out. So certain was the Spanish governor of capturing the freebooters, that he exacted an oath from the commander that he would execute every man of them, and gave him a negro to perform that office.

By some means Olonois gained intelligence of the plan, and starting off immediately to meet the frigate before her four consorts had joined her, had

the luck to fall across her during the night. At daylight she was boarded on both sides by the barks of the freebooters, and a desperate engagement commenced, which terminated favourably for the rovers, ninety men succumbing to twenty-one. It is painful to add that the victorious pirate chief beheaded every man of the prisoners but one, not even sparing the negro who was to have been his own executioner. The solitary wretch preserved was despatched to the governor, with a threat that the same fate awaited that official. Olonois then set out in pursuit of the four smaller Spanish ships, captured them without resistance, and, finding no booty, flung their crews into the sea.

To recount one tithe of the exploits performed by these men would fill a volume—projects of such extraordinary audacity that the success which commonly attended them seemed to read more like fiction than the stern unexaggerated fact which it is. Van Horn, Grammont, Laurent de Gratt, Morgan, Harris, Sawkins, and Deviot, are amongst the names most celebrated in their annals. The account of an overland journey, between the Pacific and the Atlantic, made by a party of freebooters, is unequalled by any romance that novelist ever penned. This incident took place in 1688,

and with it the existence of the genuine freebooters may be said to close.

Now sprung up a class of ruffians who, whilst bearing the name of "freebooter," were nothing less than bloodthirsty pirates, without a particle of the rude heroism that had distinguished their predecessors. The chief place of resort for these sea-robbers was the Island of Providence, and the numerous bays and lagoons scattered about the Bahamas, lurking-places affording secure shelter for the small vessels in which they conducted their depredations. Chased from thence by the British men-of-war, the rovers retired to Cuba, and actually received encouragement from the Spanish authorities, until Mr. Laws, the English governor of Jamaica, and Admiral Vernon, cleared the seas entirely of these marauders.

Since then enterprising or misguided men have from time to time adopted the profession of piracy, and the Bahamas have ever been the favourite quarters for such people, until their career was brought to a close by the halter. With common pirates we need not concern ourselves in this volume; with the buccaneers and freebooters it is totally different. The former are only vulgar criminals, the latter have established their claim to a place in history.

CHAPTER V.

THE ISLAND OF JAMAICA AND ITS HISTORY.

I NOW come to the most important British possession in the West Indies—the Island of Jamaica, one of the Greater Antilles, a large tract of land lying between 17° 40′ and 18° 30′ N. lat., and extending from 76° 15′ to 78° 25′ W. long. The island runs almost east and west, with a length of nearly 150 miles, whilst its average width is 40 miles. Its superficial area is about 4300 square miles, or more than 2,750,000 acres, only two-fifths of which were under cultivation, even during the height of the colony's prosperity.

The island is generally of great altitude, more particularly the eastern portion, where the highest peaks of the Blue Mountains reach an elevation of 7105 feet. A ridge, running across from south-east to north-west, separates the mountain region from the less elevated western district; the spot where this chain joins the Blue Mountains is

4500 feet above the sea. The summits of the lofty hills are densely wooded, their declivities more open. The largest level tract is found near the promontory of Morant Point, the most eastern cape of the island.

Possessing a coast-line of more than 500 miles in length, Jamaica can boast of thirty harbours, and more than double that number of bays, creeks, and inlets, capable of affording shelter to shipping. Its best havens are Port Morant, Kingston, and Old Harbour on the south coast, and St. Antonio and Montego Bay to the north. As a rule the island is well watered ; numerous small rivers, some of which form beautiful cascades, irrigate the plantations ; one of them, the Black River, is navigable for twenty miles by flat-bottomed boats.

From its tropical position the climate of Jamaica is necessarily hot, and in the low-lying plains often unhealthy, but a cooling sea-breeze blows throughout the day and mitigates the effect of the great heat. The north side of the island enjoys greater salubrity than the south. The seasons correspond so closely with the general description already given, that they need no further notice. Hurricanes often occur in the summer, between the two rainy seasons, but at no other time of the year.

Jamaica is politically divided into three districts

or counties—Surrey, Middlesex, and Cornwall—each of which is further partitioned into parishes.

The county of Surrey embraces the eastern part of the island, in which is situated the Blue Mountains and a portion of the Plain of Liguanea. The city of Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, stands at the south-western corner of this division. Middlesex occupies the central portion of the island, and Cornwall the western. Mr. Martin gives the following table of the size and physical features of each county and parish :—

Counties and Parishes.	Area in sq. miles.	Physical Features of each Parish.
Surrey—		
Kingston	6	Flat shore, gradually sloping up from the coast; *Kingston City.*
St. Andrew	124	Flat in the south, hilly and mountainous in the north; *Liguanea Plain.*
Port Royal	40	Intersected by lofty mountains and deep ravines; coast-line broken.
St. David	74	Generally hilly, mountainous rising to the northward; scenery grand.
St. Thomas in the East	215	Mountainous and hilly, picturesque valleys, flat towards the south-east coast.
Portland	139	Part of *Blue Mountain Range*, hilly and sloping to north coast, woody.
St. George	140	Ditto, and, like the preceding, well-watered; wild scenery.
Metcalfe*	—	In general hilly, declining towards the north coast; aspect rugged.
Middlesex—		
St. Catherine	159	Generally level, *Healthshire* hills to the southward; *Spanish Town.*
Dorothy	58	Almost an unbroken level, between hilly ranges; coast flat.
Vere	300	Some hills, but generally flat; sterile appearance; *Portland Ridge.*
Clarendon	317	Hilly to the northward, plains and savannahs to the southward.
Manchester	210	Very hilly, Mandeville and Alligator Pond the only level spot.
St. Ann	433	The Park of Jamaica diversity of mountain, hill, plain and valley.
St. Mary	600	Intersected by hills; where level, marshy; numerous streams.
St. John	128	Pretty level, slightly varied with hills and pleasing scenery.
St. Thomas in Vale	125	Flat, surrounded by mountains on all sides; *Sixteen Mile Walk.*
Cornwall—		
St. Elizabeth	213	Mountainous and large plains, with fine breeding-farms.
Westmoreland	308	Some mountains, but generally flat or undulating marshy coast.
Hanover	212	Ditto, with intervening plains and swampy shore.
St. James	227	Chiefly mountainous, hilly, well-watered, and wooded.
Trelawny	264	Mountains, hills, dales, and plains; flat towards the north coast.
Total	4,292	* Area of Metcalfe not known.

The geological features of Jamaica are varied, porphyry, sienite, and greenstone forming the base, whilst blue and white limestone abound, as also quartz of different varieties. Near Kingston is found a sort of white, smooth-grained bastard marble, often used in building, and in some localities ribbon rock is observable. Although the presence of gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron have been traced, these minerals have not hitherto been found in sufficient abundance to make working them a profitable speculation.

The soil of Jamaica is exceedingly fertile, and presents a marked difference in various localities, that on the north coast being of a rich chocolate colour, whilst in other parts the plough turns up a bright yellow earth, in which the sugar-cane thrives luxuriantly. To the very summit of the mountains the soil is productive, consisting of a rich black mould mixed with shells, in which anything will grow when the land is cleared.

Kingston, the commercial capital, is a beautiful city when viewed from the sea, but a closer acquaintance reveals that, although laid out upon a good plan, many of the houses are dilapidated, and that during wet weather the streets are literally impassable. It contains some handsome buildings, a theatre, churches of all denominations, and a

large penitentiary. At the back of the town lies the racecourse, and on the slopes of the Liguanea Plain are erected the "Pens" or country houses of wealthy colonists. The latter are usually situated in well-cultivated grounds, and are fitted with all the latest improvements of modern luxury. Kingston may be regarded as the commercial capital of Jamaica; its political centre is Spanish Town.

The latter city was founded by the Spaniards in 1500, under the name of *St. Jago de la Vega*, and occupies a position in the centre of a flat, thirteen miles distant from Kingston. Here is situated the Government Residence, which forms one side of a handsome square; the House of Assembly, Council Chamber, Law Offices, and other public buildings occupying the other sides. From the fact of fine houses standing side by side with wretched negro hovels, and from the streets being unpaved and choked with garbage of every description, the general appearance of Spanish Town is apt to create a melancholy feeling in the breast of the visitor unaccustomed to the squalor that there meets him at every corner. All writers unite in deploring the condition of both this city and of Kingston; none of the other towns in the island merit particular notice.

Jamaica is a Crown colony, the executive resting

in the hands of a governor, who is styled Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief. This official, as well as the council, consisting of twelve persons, is appointed by the Queen. The House of Assembly, or Lower House, consists of two members returned by each parish, and by a representative from Kingston, Spanish Town, and Port Royal.

The principal products of the island are sugar, rum, and molasses, but the growth of cane has greatly diminished of late years. Coffee, pepper, turmeric, and castor-oil, also form valuable articles of export; together with arrowroot, succades, shrub, honey, bees'-wax, logwood, fustic, mahogany, lignum vitæ, and cocoa-nuts. The sugar plantations are situated on the lower and warmer tracts of the island; the coffee thrives best on the hills and their declivities. Tobacco is largely grown by the negroes for their own use, and maize is universally cultivated, as also the yam, cassava, sweet potato, and other roots. European fruits, with the exception of the grape, cannot be said to flourish; but all tropical varieties yield abundantly, and several species that have been introduced, as the mango, bread and jack-fruit, the plantain, and banana.

Cattle are plentiful, and the climate apparently is well adapted for stock raising; many oxen are employed in agriculture and for draught purposes.

Horses and mules thrive; and the same may be said of sheep, hogs, and most descriptions of poultry.

The total population of Jamaica, including the Caicos and Turk's Island, was at the last census 510,354, of whom but a very small number are of unmixed European descent; the remainder, being either pure Africans, or possessing a smaller or greater admixture of European blood, are known generally as "people of colour," but are further subdivided with much nicety and no little jealousy in the following manner:—

The offspring of a white man and a negro woman is a Mulatto.		
"	"	Mulatto woman is a Terceron.
"	"	Terceron woman is a Quadroon (Quateron).
"	"	Quadroon woman is a Quinteron.
"	"	Quinteron woman is a Mestee (nearly white).

There are necessarily other grades, as, for instance, when the father is a negro and the mother a mulatto; in this case the offspring is known as a "Sambo;" but it is not requisite to dwell upon this subject, although it is one of great importance in the eyes of the coloured population.

The history of Jamaica is the history of slavery in the British West Indies, and the interest attached to it on that account is considerably heightened by the presence of a body of men, almost as unique as the buccaneers and freebooters,

who struggled continually to shake off the British rule, and proved a source of constant disquiet to the island. These men were the Maroons.

I can only attempt a most imperfect sketch of the history of Jamaica, for to give more than the merest outline would occupy volumes greater than this; but in view of the island being our principal possession in those seas, and, from events that have occurred within the memory of men still young, being a spot regarded with particular interest by most people, I shall not err in laying its principal historical events before the reader, even although my so doing may cause me to abridge the account of other islands, the property of foreign powers.

Jamaica was discovered by Columbus when on his second voyage. On May 5th, 1494, he landed upon it, and was so much enchanted with its beautiful and diversified scenery as always to prefer it to any of his other discoveries, in consequence of which his son chose it for his dukedom. The word Jamaica is a corruption of *Xaymaca*, the Indian name for the island, supposed to signify "The land of wood and water."

The Spaniards did not occupy it for good until some years later. Las Casas records that event as follows:—

"In the year 1509, the Islands of *St. John* and *Jamaica*, that look'd like fruitful gardens, were possess'd by the *Spaniards*, with the same bloudy intentions as the others were; for there they also exercised their accustomed cruelties, killing, burning, roasting men, and throwing them to the dogs, as also by oppressing them with sundry and various

A SPANISH ATTACK. (*De Borg.*)

torments in the Gold-Mines, as if they had come to rid the earth of these innocent and harmlesse creatures, of whom about 600,000 were murthered in these two Islands, so lavish were the Spanish swords of the bloud of these poor souls, scarce 200 more remaining; the rest perished without the least knowledge of God."

The good bishop's history is brief, but pregnant with meaning.

Juan d'Esquival, the leader of the Spanish settlers, built a town on the north side of the island, which, from the place of his birth, he named Sevilla d'Oro. Another city sprang up thirty miles further east, called Mililla ; and on the south side, situated on the banks of what is now the Bluefields River, stood Oriston; and further west Spanish Town, then St. Jago de la Vega. The latter city, the only one now remaining, was founded by Diego Columbus in 1525.

For 160 years from the date of its discovery, the Spaniards retained possession of Jamaica, during which the principal product of the island was cocoa. Twice during the first half of the seventeenth century it was pillaged by the English, who on the last occasion, under Colonel Jackson, captured St. Jago de la Vega, and returned to their ships laden with booty; and in 1655 it was entirely wrested from the Spaniards, by order of Oliver Cromwell, then Protector. The conquest itself was attended with little difficulty, for the Spanish colonists, who numbered some 1500 souls, had sunk into indolence and apathy, and opposed only a feeble opposition to the British troops. By the articles of capitulation the colonists were bound, either to

quit the island or to subject themselves to English rule. Some submitted, but the majority fled, charging the negro slaves to protect their property until they could return in force to reclaim it.

Retiring to the mountains, these Africans, who numbered about 1500, commenced a series of excursions against the detached British troops, murdering the outposts and sentinels, and causing the greatest apprehension to the commander, General Sedgwick. That officer, in a letter to Secretary Thurloe (1656), says of these negroes: "Having no moral sense, and not understanding what the laws and customs of civilized nations mean, we know not how to capitulate or treat with any of them. But be assured they must either be destroyed or brought in, upon some terms or other; or else they will prove a great discouragement to the settling the country."

The general's forebodings were verified in that very year, for the troops having gained some temporary advantage over the negroes, the latter retaliated by cutting off and slaughtering forty soldiers, who had carelessly rambled from their quarters. This outrage caused severe measures to be adopted, and, straitened for want of provisions and ammunition, the main body of slaves, under the command of a negro named *Juan de Bolas*, surrendered to the

English on terms of pardon or freedom. A portion of them, however,—on whom was now bestowed the name of Maroons [1] — refused to capitulate, but found refuge in the fastnesses of the mountains, where their numbers were augmented by natural increase ; and, later on, by fugitive slaves absconding from their English masters. From time to time they sallied forth, murdering the planters without provocation, laying waste their fields, and proving, as General Sedgwick had predicted, a thorn in the sides of the English.

In 1663, the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir C. Lyttelton, and his council, offered a free pardon, freedom from all slavery, and twenty acres of land, to every Maroon that would surrender, but the proclamation was of little effect. Their present mode of existence admirably suited a class to whom freedom had been denied in early life, and who now revelled in unrestricted liberty. Few took advantage of this opportunity, and they murdered their quondam leader, *Juan de Bolas*, who was sent against them.

Refusing to treat in any way with the authori-

[1] *Maroon.*—According to Long, the historian of Jamaica, this word, amongst the Spanish-Americans, signifies *Hog-hunters;* fugitive negroes usually adopting that avocation. The "Encyclopédie," under heading *Maron*, gives a different derivation. "On appelle *Marons*, dans les isles Françoises, les nègres fugitifs. Ce terme vient du mot Espagnol *Simaran*, qui signifie un Singe."

ties, the Maroons, for the space of forty years, murdered every white person, without distinction of age or sex, who came within their reach; a long period, during which no less a sum than 240,000*l.* was spent in efforts for their suppression. In 1730 they had grown so formidable, under a leader of much ability, named Cudjoe, that it was found necessary to ensure the safety of the inhabitants by two additional regiments. But I must quit the Maroons for a space to trace the march of events in the island up to this date.

Cromwell was bent on colonizing Jamaica, and to encourage its trade issued a proclamation in 1655, that all goods should be transported to the island duty free, for seven years; and that no tax should be placed on colonial productions for ten years. Charles continued the Protector's policy towards Jamaica; in 1662, a militia was organized, judges appointed, a municipality formed, and the tenure of land regulated; the children of British subjects born in the island were at the same time authorized to assume the same privileges as those born within the realm; emigration was encouraged in every way; and the arrival of a considerable number of Jews gave an impetus to commerce. In 1664, the first legislative assembly was elected. About this time the importation of African slaves

began to assume considerable importance, owing to the establishment of chartered companies, which were patronized by royalty.

The history of the island, until nearly the close of the century, exhibits the effect exercised by the pirates and freebooters, who frequently repaired to Port Royal, for the purposes of debauch, and there flung away their hard-won gold in the manner already described. The demand for provisions created by these unruly visitors gave a stimulus to agriculture, especially in the neighbourhood of Port Royal, and many of the farmers became rich enough to start privateers of their own. All kinds of curious people settled on the island, who applied their best talents to gratifying the licentious passions of the freebooters, and earned a golden harvest thereby. A historian justly says: "Jamaica had at this period made marvellous progress in respect to population and agricultural resources, but in a moral point of view its condition was truly deplorable. The strife, vice, and misery attendant on slavery became early manifest; the attempts of the wretched captives to regain their freedom, and the predatory incursions of the Maroons, even then scourged the colonists. Port Royal itself united to more than royal opulence the worst vices, and the lowest depravity that ever disgraced a seaport;

nor could anything else be expected in a city whose most honoured denizens were buccaneers, most welcome visitors slave-traders."

But a day of reckoning was at hand. On the 7th of June, 1692, between eleven o'clock and noon, when the legislators of Jamaica were sitting in session, and the roystering freebooters crushing cups of wine at the taverns; when the merchants were gloating over their lately acquired plunder, and the Hebrew was counting his red and white ingots; then, when the sky was clear, the air serene, and the people wholly unprepared, the enemy came upon the devoted city. A tremendous roar, like the discharge of many pieces of heavy ordnance, rolled along the base of the mountains, and startled the heedless population. But escape was impossible, for without further warning the earthquake was upon them, and in three minutes the town of Port Royal was a scene of desolation.

Consisting of a vast assemblage of houses, situated on a bank of sand that ran into the sea—a site selected solely on account of its immediate proximity to the harbour—the foundation of Port Royal was never very secure at the best of times, and now that subterranean agencies attacked it, the ill-fated city collapsed like a house of cards. First the wharves nearest the water disappeared,

then those more remote; and this was but a prelude to the fate that befell the town. The streets gaped open, disclosing dreadful fissures, into which the fleeing inhabitants fell, and were seen no more; then the town sank beneath the waves, and the waters rolled over the spot that not a minute before had contained the habitations of men. Southey, the historian, says: "Several of the inhabitants were swallowed up, and returned again to the surface of the earth through distant apertures, which had no visible connexion with that which first yawned to receive them. Some were returned alive, and even without any material injury. The waters rose, and filled the houses which had survived the shock to the upper story—a preternatural tide, that was to ebb no more."

At least a quarter of a mile of the neck of land whereon the city stood was submerged several fathoms beneath the waves; the sea in the harbour mounted up as though tossed by a hurricane; the ships parted their cables, and drifted helplessly over the troubled waters. The *Swan* frigate was lifted over the roofs of the sunken houses, and saved some hundreds of people, who were struggling with the waves. Nearly the whole of Port Royal was destroyed, 3000 inhabitants and their houses find-

ing one common grave. Only the fort and about 200 houses escaped.

Nor were the effects of this dreadful convulsion confined to Port Royal alone. The mountains, through which the Rio Cobre ran, closed together, and the course of that considerable river was left dry for some days. On the north side of the island a whole tract of 1000 acres, with its buildings and inhabitants, disappeared, and the features of the country were, in many places, totally altered. And with the catastrophe the punishment was not ended; another calamity was in store for the people of Port Royal. The foul gases generated by hundreds of decomposing corpses, either floating about the harbour, or piled in heaps on the beach, bred a fierce pestilence beneath that vertical sun, and 3000 more of the unhappy citizens perished from disease. Curiously enough a party of French freebooters were making a raid upon the north coast of Jamaica at this time, when their vessels were driven out to sea, and fifty-three of their number swallowed up by the earthquake.

The inhabitants had scarcely recovered from the terror occasioned by the above catastrophe, when they were alarmed by rumours of a French invasion. On 17th June, 1694, a fleet with 1500 soldiers on board, commanded by M. Du Casse,

Governor of Hispaniola (Haiti), appeared off Cow Bay, where 800 of the troops were landed, with orders to desolate the country as far as Port Morant. To the eternal dishonour of the French nation it is recorded that they obeyed these instructions to the fullest extent; Sir William Beeston the British Governor, reports to the Secretary of State, that they not only set fire to every settlement they came to, but tortured their prisoners in the most shocking manner, murdering great numbers in cold blood, and committing other atrocities too horrible to bear repetition in these pages. The militia had unfortunately been withdrawn to defend the capital, so that the French encountered no resistance, and after seizing 1000 slaves and destroying the plantations, Du Casse sailed for Carlisle Bay. Here were 200 Englishmen, who, although without any other fortification than an ill-contrived breast-work, made a gallant resistance; but wonld have been eventually compelled to retreat had it not been for the opportune arrival of reinforcements, when they drove the invaders back to their ships.

Since the legislative assembly had been first created, that body had always contested the right of taxation claimed by the crown, and resisted the levy of four-and-a-half per cent. on the gross produce of the island. For considerably over half a

century the struggle had continued, but in the year 1728 a compromise was happily effected, by the assembly consenting to settle on the crown a fixed revenue of 8000*l.* per annum, upon certain conditions. This instrument, known as the Revenue Act, was passed, and its confirmation by the king put an end to a contest disgraceful to the home government, and injurious to the people and interests of the island.

CHAPTER VI.

HISTORY OF JAMAICA (CONTINUED).

WE must now return again to the Maroons, whom in the former chapter I mentioned as having, in 1730, become so formidable under Cudjoe, that two additional regiments had been added to the military force on the island. These troops were formed into independent companies, and, with the local militia, were entirely employed in the suppression of the marauding blacks. Into the minute details of every engagement I cannot enter; two examples will illustrate the manner in which the guerilla warfare was conducted.

In 1734 Captain Stoddart, commanding a detached party, projected an attack upon Nanny, a Maroon town perched on the summit of one of the highest mountains in the island. Provided with several portable swivel guns, his party crept up the ascent, and arrived unobserved within a short distance of the enemy's retreat. A single path,

steep, rocky, and difficult, remained to be surmounted—a track so narrow that only two persons could scale it abreast. If attacked here the whole party must have fallen; but exercising the greatest caution, the troops gained a small eminence that overlooked the town, whose inhabitants were buried in slumber. Planting his swivels, Stoddart opened a murderous fire on the unhappy negroes, by which many were killed in their houses, whilst others, bewildered with terror, fell headlong over the precipice. Following up his advantage, the gallant captain gave the order to charge, when his men killed most of the remaining Maroons, and so severely handled them that their power for evil never became again formidable in that part of the island. This, I presume, was legitimate warfare, but it reads uncommonly like heartless butchery.

One more instance. The Maroons having perceived that the troops under Colonel Charlton were given to straying from their quarters, made a daring attack upon the barracks whilst the officers were at dinner and their men dispersed. Fortunately the attempt failed and the negroes were repulsed, but retreated to the woods in such good order that the militia feared to follow them. Rumours of this skirmish reached Spanish Town, and threw the inhabitants into the greatest alarm;

the trumpets were sounded, the drums beat, and a hastily collected body of foot and horse went forth to oppose the foe, whom all supposed to be marching to attack the town. On the second day the British fell in with them, but the Maroons declined to measure their strength in the open, and retreated with the loss of several men.

The above will show what dread these outlaws inspired, nor was it unreasonable. The Maroons were utter savages, who, being thoroughly acquainted with every secret avenue of the country, could descend upon the whites at the most unsuspected times and places, slaughtering the men and carrying off the women to a fate worse than death. Skulking about the borders of plantations, they surprised stragglers, brutally killed the cattle, and took away the slaves—not to free them, but to exact from them a servitude of a more severe nature than they had been accustomed to under their European masters. They had become a scourge so great that an act of the Legislature, passed in 1733, speaking of them, says that "they have grown very formidable in the north-east, north-west, and south-western districts of the island, to the great terror of his Majesty's subjects in those parts, who had greatly suffered by the frequent robberies, murders, and depredations committed by

them; that in the parish of Clarendon, St. Ann, St. Elizabeth, Westmoreland, Hanover, and St. James's, they were considerably multiplied, and had large settlements among the mountains and least accessible parts, whence they plundered all around them, and caused several plantations to be thrown up and abandoned, and prevented many valuable tracts of land from being cultivated, to the great prejudice and diminution of his Majesty's revenue, &c."

Finding the employment of flying parties ineffectual, the Assembly ordered fortified barracks to be erected near the enemy's favourite haunts, in each of which a strong garrison was placed, composed of trained men. Issuing from their fortresses, these people imitated the tactics of their foes, scouring the woods and mountains, destroying the provision-gardens of the Maroons, and tracking them to their lairs with bloodhounds, for each barrack was furnished with a pack of dogs, *provided by the churchwardens of the respective parishes.*

By 1737 this mode of warfare had told considerably against the Maroons, and in that year the government called in the services of 200 Mosquito Indians, who tracked the negroes to their caves more skilfully even than the hounds. At this juncture Governor Trelawney made overtures of

peace, and the Maroons, harassed and reduced, gladly embraced them. Articles of pacification were signed, whereby two tracts of land, of 1500 and 1000 acres respectively, were granted to them and their descendants in perpetuity; and the premium allowed for the apprehension of runaway slaves increased to 3*l.* per head, whilst heavy penalties were decreed against all who should venture to harbour fugitives.

Thus the island was once more at rest; but a regulation which removed the Maroons from the bulk of the negro population, by whom they must soon have been absorbed, was unwise in the extreme, and bore bad fruit hereafter. Another more serious mistake was denying to this people all means of moral and religious improvement. Possessed of fervid imaginations, but steeped in darkest ignorance, the Maroons revived in all their horrors the gloomy superstitions that had accompanied them from the African shore, and *Obi*, with its witchcraft and sorceries, its charms of blood, feathers, parrots' beaks, dogs' and alligators' teeth, broken bottles, grave dirt, and other silly abominations, reigned paramount amongst them. Now that access to their haunts was possible, the manners and customs of this people could be observed; and these, if remarkable, were far from pleasing. It

seems strange that such a set of savages should ever have submitted to any system of government; but the freedom still allowed them, and the large reward accruing to the capture of runaway slaves, satisfied their greed, and found an outlet for their turbulent dispositions. Their chief employment was the chase of the wild boar, an animal which abounds in the forests of Jamaica. Curing the flesh by a process peculiar to themselves, they brought it into the towns for sale, expending their gains in salt beef, spirits, tobacco, fire-arms, and ammunition, but never wasting a penny on such a superfluity as clothing. Their language was a barbarous African jargon, mixed with Spanish and broken English.

Having it always in their power to procure necessaries in exchange for the animals they killed in the chase, the Maroons never dreamt of cultivating garden produce, which was much more easily obtained by theft. A little corn they perhaps raised, but this was left entirely to the women, whom they treated like beasts of burden, and subjected to every cruelty. Polygamy prevailed universally among them; some of their chief men had as many as six wives, and Bryan Edwards quaintly observes, "The miseries of their situation left these poor creatures neither leisure nor inclina-

tion to quarrel with each other." The brutality manifested towards their consorts was extended to their offspring, it being no uncommon circumstance for a drunken father to dash his infant against a rock to still its wailings ; and the young girls were early forced into vicious courses by their unnatural parents.

When visited by Europeans the Maroons sometimes treated their guests to a mock fight, one of which, performed by these people in the presence of the governor, Mr. Long thus describes :—" No sooner did the horn sound the signal than they all joined in a most hideous yell, or war-whoop, and bounded into action. With amazing agility they ran, or rather rolled, through the various firings and evolutions. This part of their exercise, indeed, more justly deserves to be styled *evolution* than any that is practised by the regular troops ; for they fire stooping almost to the very ground ; and no sooner are their muskets discharged than they throw themselves into a thousand antic gestures, and tumble over and over, so as to be continually shifting their place, the intention of which is to elude the shot, as well as to deceive the aim of their adversaries, which their nimble and almost instantaneous change of position renders very uncertain. When this part of their exercise was

over, they drew their swords; and winding their horn again, began, in wild and warlike gestures, to advance towards his Excellency, endeavouring to throw as much savage fury into their looks as possible. On approaching near him some waved their rusty blades over his head, then gently laid them upon it; whilst others clashed their arms together in horrid concert. They next brought their muskets, and piled them up in heaps at his feet, &c."

In person the Maroons were a remarkably fine body of men, their demeanour lofty, their walk firm, and their figures erect. Unfettered by clothing, their muscles stood out prominently from beneath a skin supple and shining as black velvet; their sight and hearing were also very acute, but their taste depraved, as exemplified in their preferring putrid to fresh beef.

Curious as all these traits are, perhaps a more extraordinary characteristic than all was the abominable cruelty with which the Maroons treated runaway slaves—their own countrymen. Without provocation they maimed and put to death these unfortunate beings, until the legislature was compelled to allow them mile-money for bringing in a captive; otherwise they carried his head alone, which saved them the trouble of guarding the

prisoner. The enormities they practised on the bodies of their enemies also showed their ferocious dispositions.

Meanwhile the history of Jamaica presents one long, melancholy record of misrule and dissensions under governors as vicious as the people over whom they presided. African slaves were imported by thousands, and after undergoing the horrors of the middle passage were handed over to pitiless taskmasters possessing almost arbitrary powers. These helpless victims from time to time rose in revolt, but were crushed down again with an iron hand. In 1678, 1684, 1686, 1691, 1702, 1717, 1722, 1734, 1736, 1739, 1740, 1745, 1758, and 1760, more or less extensive conspiracies and insurrections occurred. Of the last-named I must make some further mention.

Some hundred Coromantee negroes had been imported, among whom one, named Tacky, had been a chief in his own country. Under this man's leadership the slaves on a plantation in St. Mary's parish rose, proceeded to the fort at Port Maria, surprised and killed the sentinel, and possessed themselves of sufficient arms and ammunition. Joined by numbers of their countrymen, they marched into the interior, slaughtering the whites, and actually drinking their blood mixed with rum.

In one morning they murdered between thirty and forty Europeans, sparing neither women nor infants at the breast. The colonists, in the utmost alarm, rushed to arms, and, aided by the military, defeated the insurgents at Heywood Hall, and then followed a fearful vengeance. It being deemed necessary to make a terrible example, three of the ringleaders convicted of murder were sentenced, one to be burnt alive, the other two to be hung up alive in irons, and kept in that position until they perished.

I have no wish to record harrowing scenes, but in the earlier pages of this sketch I have dwelt with natural indignation on the cruelties of the Spaniards towards the Indians, and to make no mention of the conduct of our own countrymen would be a gross injustice, and would seem to palliate acts of brutal and inhuman rigour that makes the reader's blood run cold in his veins. I will not trust myself to paraphrase, but extract the verbatim account of Bryan Edwards, a kindly-hearted man, who has left us the best history of the West Indies extant.

He says:[1] "The wretch that was burnt was made to sit on the ground, and his body being chained to a stake, the fire was applied to his feet.

[1] Vol. ii., page 65.

He uttered not a groan, and saw his legs reduced to ashes with the utmost firmness and composure; after which, one of his arms by some means getting loose, he snatched a brand from the fire that was consuming him, and flung it in the face of the executioner. The two that were hung up alive were indulged, at their own request, with a hearty meal immediately before they were suspended on the gibbet, which was erected in the parade of the town of Kingston. From that time until they expired they never uttered the least complaint, except only of cold in the night, but diverted themselves all day long in discourse with their countrymen, who were permitted, very improperly, to surround the gibbet. On the seventh day a notion prevailed among the spectators that one of them wanted to communicate an important secret to his master, my near relation; who being in St Mary's, the commanding officer sent for me. I endeavoured, by means of an interpreter, to let him know that I was present; but I could not understand what he said in return. I remember that both he and his fellow-sufferer laughed immoderately at something that occurred—I know not what. The next morning one of them silently expired, as did the other on the morning of the ninth day."

Mr. Long, speaking of these two men, remarks,

"They behaved, all the time, with a degree of hardened insolence and brutal insensibility."

Such is a page from the blood-stained history of the West Indies, nearly a century and a half later than the date at which the Spaniards committed their atrocities. Can any one regret the abolition of slavery, when that odious traffic hardened men's hearts to enact such vengeance as is described above?

The Maroons were called upon, under the articles of the treaty concluded with them, to assist in the suppression of this rebellion. They appeared with a great number of severed human ears, for which they claimed and received the reward, but it was soon discovered that these trustworthy allies had never fired a shot at their sable kinsmen, but, visiting the field of battle at Heywood Hall, had mutilated the heads of the negroes already killed by the colonists. One deed of valour they committed. Finding the Coromantee leader Tacky, wandering in the woods without arms or clothing, they most gallantly shot the miserable fugitive, and, having cut off his head, roasted and ate his heart and entrails.

But the terrible revenge exacted failed to repress the yearning for liberty so deeply seated in the African breast, and insurrections were of frequent

occurrence, always followed by the addition of more stringent penal clauses in the "Code Noir." Ten offences, some of them so trivial as absconding into the woods, or attempting to escape in a boat, were punishable under this law with death or mutilation, such as amputation of the toes, &c. Killing a slave in cold blood was certainly forbidden, under penalty of imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months; but as the testimony of a slave could not be received in evidence against a white man, conviction was next to impossible, even had any one thought proper to press the charge.

Meanwhile the moral tone of society throughout the island was exceedingly low; few of the planters marrying, but forming connexions with coloured women, that gave origin to a whole race of half-breeds. Even when a man was married, it was thought quite proper that his own family and his illegitimate children should be brought up under one roof. Nor was this all. Not contented with the vices above recorded, the depraved colonists borrowed a new one from the Orientals, and intoxication by means of laudanum became the rule through all classes of society. Long records that he has seen a whole company of men, at table, pledge one another in this liquor; and proceeds

to dwell on its fatal influence amongst the women, who, by it, are "deprived of their reason, and driven into the most incoherent ravings in their conversation, and the wildest extravagancies in their conduct; thus sacrificing sense, beauty, health, fame, and even virtue, to this pernicious habit." The account he gives of the effect it produces on the features is truly horrible, poisoning the whole corporeal mass until the lips are of a deadly pale or livid hue, and the face cadaverous. He attributes to the over-use of this drug the drawling, faltering speech, that characterized the colonists. West Indian history can hardly be called agreeable reading!

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORY OF JAMAICA (CONTINUED).

WE now arrive at the last Maroon war, which terminated in that curious race being broken up for all further purposes of evil.

In July, 1795, two Maroons, from Trelawney Town, having stolen some pigs, were apprehended, tried, found guilty, and ordered to receive thirty-nine lashes on the back; the punishment was inflicted by a fellow-negro, the overseer of the workhouse. This was extremely ill-advised on the part of the authorities, for the Maroons regarded the administration of the lash *by a slave* as an insult, and on the culprits returning to their homes the inhabitants of Trelawney Town made common cause with them; and, after violent altercations among themselves, ordered the superintendent, Captain Craskell, to quit the settlement on pain of death; they also sent a written defiance to the magistrates at Montego Bay, threatening to

attack the town on the 20th of that month (July).

The blood-stained excesses of the French Revolution had awakened an echo even in these distant islands. The National Assembly having declared that all men were free, the slave population of Haiti rose against their masters (1790), and ultimately acquired a recognition of their independence. The authorities of the other islands viewed this struggle with serious alarm, for the minds of men were in a very unsettled state, and their eyes were centred on the upheaval of all landmarks that inaugurated the destruction of the French monarchy and the establishment of the Republic. Jamaica, with her large coloured population, was particularly exposed to danger; within a few hours' sail of Haiti, revolutionary doctrines made their entry, despite the vigilance of the ruling class, whilst mistrust and suspicion made a collision of castes doubly imminent.

The Maroons, although nominally confined to certain districts, had, since the pacification of 1739, been in the habit of maintaining a close intercourse with the slave population, in the capacity of pedlars, which necessarily brought them much into contact with their enslaved brethren. Apprehensive of a coalition between these kindred races, the legis-

lature endeavoured to create a breach by enacting (1791) that the testimony of slaves against Maroons should hold good in the courts of law. This was an exceedingly short-sighted measure, and one that only imprudent fear could have elicited; for as the Maroons had for many years been the chief police for the recapture of runaways, the new law was nothing less than a direct invitation to the latter to revenge themselves. At the same time the permission to wander, which had been tacitly granted to the Maroons, was abruptly rescinded; the people confined within the precincts of their towns; and their superintendent, a great favourite, removed, on the plea that the discipline maintained by him was not of a sufficiently stringent nature. These were harsh measures, and awoke deep discontent amongst the free negroes.

At this juncture the Earl of Balcarres was appointed Governor of Jamaica. Most of the historians of the island speak favourably of his administrative capacity, but Mr. Montgomerie Martin appears to me to have estimated his character more justly. He says: "Impetuous and prejudiced, he (Lord Balcarres) appears to have taken for granted that all the coloured population were ready to follow the example of their brethren in San Domingo; he was consequently on the

watch for the slightest demonstration from any quarter that could be construed into rebellion, that he might crush it in the bud."

So the Maroons, objecting to the indignity of whipping by a slave, became openly mutinous, and afforded the governor the opportunity he sought. At a conference between some of the leading magistrates and the Maroons, the latter complained, not of any injustice inflicted on their companions, but of the disgrace incurred by their whole body, in that the culprits had been punished by a black driver in the presence of fugitive and felon negro slaves, many of whom they themselves had apprehended. They demanded reparation for this indignity, the dismissal of Captain Craskell, and the reappointment of Mr. James, their former superintendent.

The earl turned a deaf ear to these moderate suggestions, recalled a large body of troops that had already left the island (by means of a swift-rowing boat), declared martial law, and surrounded the rebel centre.

A terror seems to have stricken the whole white community that the slaves would rise *en masse;* the most thoughtful and considerate amongst them anticipating all the horrors of San Domingo, and beholding, in imagination,

their houses destroyed and their families put to the sword.

On the 8th of August the Governor sent a proclamation to the Maroons, calling upon them to surrender by the 13th of that month, as the only means of escaping the destruction to which he destined them. On the 11th thirty-eight of the old men from Trelawney Town gave themselves up, declaring that their companions were determined on going to war. The ensuing night the Maroons burnt their own town, and commenced hostilities by attacking the British outposts.

It is estimated that the Maroons only numbered three hundred fighting men, yet this small body held our troops at bay for many months, planning attacks with great skill, and laying ambushes into which the soldiers helplessly blundered. They had established their head-quarters in a sort of valley, or dell, surrounded by steep precipices and broken rocks, and by lofty mountains perforated with caverns, in the recesses of which they secreted their women and children, and deposited their ammunition. Only by an almost perpendicular path, formed in the face of a rock one hundred and fifty feet in height, could the *Cockpits*—as this retreat was named—be reached, and to the booted European the descent was impossible, even had he been

unarmed and unopposed; his bare-footed adversaries surmounted it without difficulty.

The reduction of the enemy, by means of a cordon circling their fastness, was not completed when Christmas drew near, and already two distinguished officers—Colonels Sandford and Fitch—together with a great number of men, had fallen. At the close of the year a brief holiday was usually allotted to the slaves, and it was feared that they would take advantage of the season to join the Maroons, so renewed efforts were made to destroy the stubborn blacks. Under General Walpole, fresh troops were ordered up, the passes occupied, and all access to water cut off. Want of water was the weak point of the *Cockpits*. Still the Maroons showed no sign of yielding, obtaining a scanty supply of moisture from the leaves of the wild pine; and the war might have dragged on for many months had a new agent not been brought to bear upon the rebels.

The Legislative Assembly, convened in September, had discussed the feasiblity of employing Cuban bloodhounds to reduce the Maroons. The stream of public feeling in England, owing to the exertions of Clarkson and Wilberforce, ran very strong against slave-owners, and they knew that such a measure would draw down upon them the

odium of the mother country; but considering that self-preservation was the first law, they vanquished all scruples, despatched a commissioner to Havannah, and on the 14th December that gentleman returned to Montego Bay with forty Spanish *chasseurs* and one hundred bloodhounds. The arguments by which they reconciled this measure to their consciences would be amusing if it were not on so horrible a subject—one disgracing our name throughout the world.

Before, however, the dogs were let loose, General Walpole opened communication with the rebels, and they decided to submit. That this was in a great measure attributable to the reports that had been freely circulated concerning the ferocity of the dogs is undoubted. The Cuban bloodhound—equal to the mastiff in bulk, and uniting the agility of the greyhound to the courage of the bulldog—is an awkward beast to contend with at any time, but the credulous negroes had invested their new foes with a variety of imaginary attributes, and with unfeigned terror they now tendered their submission—an opening which General Walpole very wisely made use of. By a treaty concluded on the 21st December, it was settled that the Maroons should, on their knees, ask the King's pardon; that they should fix their future residence

in such part of the island as the legislature should point out; and that they should deliver up all the fugitive slaves who had joined them. On these conditions it was stipulated that their lives should be spared, and that they should not be transported from the island. Ten days were allowed in which to collect their families and perform the treaty.

Owing to the difficulty of communicating with each other, only a few surrendered within the specified time, whereupon Lord Balcarres, heedless of the remonstrances of General Walpole, ordered that officer to advance with the hounds. The effect was instantaneous; the whole body gave in their submission, as there seems no reason to doubt that they had intended doing from the first. I must mention, however, that the dogs were never actually slipped.

The Governor took advantage of their not having come in by the fixed day, to infringe the treaty article relative to transportation; backed up by an obsequious and slave-holding legislature, he removed six hundred Maroons to a spot in Nova Scotia, purchased for their reception by the Jamaica Government.

General Walpole was justly indignant at what he considered a cruel breach of faith. Addressing Lord Balcarres and the Assembly, he pointed out

that the Maroons had endeavoured to surrender within the given time, and that "they had proceeded more than half-way, with loads on their backs of clothes and children." His remonstrances were disregarded, in consequence of which he refused a five-hundred guinea sword voted him by the legislature, stating that he would not be implicated in the guilt and infamy of such a proceeding.

The sum of 25,000*l.* was allowed by the Assembly for the purpose of settling the Maroons in their new abode, at which place they arrived in July, 1796. Sir John Wentworth, the Governor of Nova Scotia, writes in November of that year: "The Maroons are now comfortably settled, and their situation will be daily improving. They are hitherto quiet, orderly, and contented. I have long had experience useful for this occasion, and have not a doubt that these will be a happy and useful people. In this country they can do no harm; nor do they seem disposed to do any. They are exceedingly attached to me. I have appointed a missionary and chaplain, with an assistant teacher, to perform the service of the Church of England, to instruct them in Christianity, and to teach the youth and children to read, write, and cypher. Last Sunday I attended public worship in their chapel,

at opening the church. The Maroons were particularly attentive, decent, and most exceedingly delighted. Next Sunday many are to be baptized, and the remainder in due course," &c.

So these people disappear from the history of Jamaica. Had the light of Christianity and education not been studiously withheld from them, they would probably never have cost the island over half a million of money for their suppression, in addition to laying its authorities open to a grave suspicion of broken faith—doubly dishonourable when practised by a professedly Christian community towards heathen savages. It may interest the reader to know that the Maroons were eventually, through the exertions of the leading abolitionists, removed to Sierra Leone, where their grandchildren still exist.

Into the dogged opposition offered by the inhabitants of Jamaica to the efforts of noble-minded English emancipators I am unable to enter; suffice it to say, that with the persistency and determination begotten of the humane cause they advocated, Clarkson, Wilberforce, Granville Sharp, and others, pursued their task unappalled by the difficulties that beset them, and by unflagging energy gained a hearing and established a conviction in the breasts of Englishmen, which was

gloriously crowned by the Abolition Act, passed on the 25th March, 1807, and made law from the commencement of the following year.

Still slavery existed in its worst form, although the importation of negroes from Africa was prohibited. The planters resolutely opposed the missionaries who devoted themselves to the amelioration of the slaves, and the scenes recorded are a scandal to humanity. Nor was the carrying traffic entirely suppressed. Under cover of the Portuguese and Spanish flags negroes were still torn away from their homes, cribbed by hundreds in ships no larger than a Thames barge—I have seen such a vessel—where the stench, dirt, confinement, and want of water, engendered pestilence, and the human cargo perished like murrained sheep. Such as survived this awful journey were eagerly purchased by planters, not in Jamaica only, but in any of the West India islands. The skipper of an "ebony ship," as these floating hells were euphemistically called, had little difficulty in finding a market. Barbadoes, Cuba—the first island under his lee—would gladly rid him of his living freight. But why follow up a subject whose every detail is sickening?

In 1831-2 a formidable slave insurrection took place in Jamaica, crushed out, as were its prede-

cessors, with merciless severity. How many lives were lost therein will never be accurately known, for the Assembly refused to issue any return on the subject. That property to the value of half a million sterling was destroyed by the negroes is established, but probably not a dozen white men perished by the hands of the insurgents. I have no wish to palliate the conduct of the negroes; but when I read that 1500 of them were shot, hanged, or otherwise put to death, for crimes in which only a score or so were probably implicated, I have misgivings whether the scales of justice were not unduly weighted by a spirit of revenge.

In 1833 the evils of slavery had grown so evident that a ministerial measure for emancipation was introduced by the Colonial Secretary, and, having passed both Houses, obtained the royal assent on the 28th August in that year. By the provisions of this bill slavery was to cease on 1st August, 1834, but the slaves were, for a stated period, to remain in the employment of their masters as apprenticed labourers, the slave-owners at the same time receiving an indemnification of 20,000,000*l.* The apprenticeship system was short-lived, and complete enfranchisement took place in 1838. The number of slaves who thus gained their liberty was 311,050 in Jamaica alone, and the planters of

that island received 6,149,934*l.* in compensation. The distribution of this large sum was conducted on an equitable scale, whereby the market value of each slave was nicely calculated. The compensation per head ranged from 31*l.* to 12*l.*; children under six years of age being reckoned at 5*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.*, and aged or diseased negroes at 4*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

The soil of Jamaica was now free, the taint of slavery was swept from the land. But it must not be supposed that a radical reform of this nature could be effected without considerable damage to the landed interest. Becoming possessed of a plot of soil so rich that the bare necessaries of life grew with little or no trouble, the negro was loath to relinquish the newly-tasted joys of an idleness most congenial to his nature; and, as a matter of course, the sugar-cane remained uncut, the coffee berries unpicked, the plantations weed-grown and untidy. The soil was prolific as ever, but the labourers were wanting to garner the abundance it put forth; estates depreciated in value, the revenue fell, Jamaica was ruined. Nor did the rival races agree together as happily as was to be wished. All offices of trust were naturally conferred on the whites—a measure which their sable brethren, in the blush of their new dignity of equality, resented as unfair, and jealousy arose on the part of the

coloured population. The susceptible negroes, ranging themselves under the banners of dissenting ministers, hostile to the Establishment, tended to make matters worse; and the importation of coolie labour from India, which was calculated to lower the high rate of wages asked by such of the coloured people as were willing to work, added much to the discontent, which gained strength until it culminated in the rebellion of 1865, the details of which are too well known to need recapitulation. Once more severity was used to crush out insurrection, and measures adopted, that a commission despatched from England for the purpose pronounced to be too harsh in their nature. Mr. Eyre—a good and humane man, whose whole history is a refutation of the crimes clamorously urged against him by well-meaning but weak people—was recalled, the representative constitution suspended, and the government assimilated to that obtaining in the other West Indian islands—namely, a Crown colony.

Reference to the statistics placed at the end of this volume will show that prosperity is again visiting Jamaica, and under happier conditions. What its teeming soil produces is now the work of free arms directed by an educated brain, although the labourer still wears "the shadowed livery of

the burnished sun." Schools are multiplying, the revenue is increasing, the population is enlarging without the aid of immigration. Let us hope that the black cloud has passed for ever from this fair and fruitful land.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEEWARD ISLANDS.

PROCEEDING eastward from Jamaica, we arrive, after passing Haiti and Puerto Rico, at the next British possession in the West Indies, consisting of the greater number of the group of islands that, in the form of a bow, extend to the coast of South America. I have already explained that this chain is divided into two groups, the Windward and Leeward Islands. Let us consider the latter section first.

The Leeward, or northern islands of the Caribbee group, comprise the colonies of Antigua, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Nevis, Dominica, and the Virgin Islands. These form six presidencies, which, by an Act passed in 1871, constitute a single Federal Colony, containing 120,499 inhabitants. A governor, appointed by the Crown, presides over the whole, assisted by an Executive Council, whose members are designated by the Queen, and by a

General Legislative Council, composed of nine elective, and nine non-elective members (re-enacted by Act II. of 1878). Each island has likewise an Executive and Legislative Council of its own, and returns one or more members to the General Legislative Council—a form of government termed "Representative."

Antigua, the most important of the group, and the seat of the Federal Government, is an island of about fifty-four miles in circumference, situated in 61°41′ W. long, and in 17° 6′ N. lat. With a length of 13½ miles from east to west, by 9¼ in breadth, it is of only moderate elevation when compared with the lofty islands lying to the southward, although Boggy Peak, its highest point, rises 1339 feet above the level of the sea. In shape Antigua is an irregular oval, with deeply indented bays and creeks, some of which penetrate to a considerable distance. Magnificent cliffs tower upwards from the sea, generally crowned with trees, and falling away towards the interior in vales and gently-rounded hills, make the scenery attractive. Want of springs is the great drawback to the island, compelling the inhabitants to rely upon the rain collected in tanks for their water supply. St. John's, the capital, is situated on an eminence to the north-west, and, in addition to the government

buildings, contains a cathedral, built at a cost of 40,000*l.*

Antigua was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, in 1493, and named by him after a church in Seville, called Santa Maria de la Antigua. A few English families settled here in 1632, and in 1663 Charles II. made a formal grant of the island to Lord Willoughby, who sent out many colonists. The French occupied it for a short time, but by the Treaty of Breda, in 1666, it was declared a British possession. A bishop of the Church of England, whose see embraces the whole Leeward group, resides here. Sugar, rum, and molasses form the principal articles of export.

Montserrat, an island twelve miles in length by eight in breadth, is situated about thirty miles north-west of Antigua. Of volcanic origin, its acclivities are lofty, rugged, and in many places inaccessible, attaining a height of 2500 feet above the sea. Its shape is nearly oval, and its shores bold and steep.

This island, discovered by Columbus in 1493, was named by him after a mountain near Barcelona, on which stood the monastery in which Ignatius Loyola conceived the project of founding the Society of Jesus. It was colonized by the English in 1632; taken by the French in 1664, and restored

to England in 1668. The French once more gained possession of it in 1782, but it was finally surrendered to the British in 1784.

The scenery of this island is most beautiful, and its climate the healthiest in the Antilles. Plymouth is its only town; sugar its principal commodity. With an area of thirty-two square miles, its total population by the last census was 8693. The government is administered by a President (subordinate to the Governor-General of the Leeward Islands), aided by an Executive and Legislative Council appointed by the Crown.

St. Christopher, or *St. Kitts*, an island twenty-three miles in length, by five in breadth, attains a great altitude, its highest point, Mount Misery, rising to the height of 4314 feet. It is dry and esteemed healthy, and with an area of sixty-three square miles, carries a population numbering 28,169 souls. Tobacco, sugar, rum, and molasses, are the principal articles of export. A Governor, assisted by a Legislative Council, consisting of five official and five unofficial members, nominated by the Queen, conducts the affairs of the island.

Like most of this group, it was discovered by Columbus in 1493, who was so charmed with its appearance that he bestowed upon it his own Christian name. By its primitive inhabitants it

was called *Liamuiga*, or Fertile Island. The capital is Basseterre, described as a low, hot, dusty town, with good buildings. Its history shows that it was alternately possessed by the English and French, but was finally ceded to the former nation by the Peace of Utrecht.

Nevis, an island situated in lat. 17° 10′ N., and long. 62° 33′ W., has a length of seven miles, by nearly six in breadth, presenting almost a circular form. It is separated from St. Kitts by a strait two miles broad at the narrowest part. Charlestown is the capital, and sugar the chief product. The constitution is the same as that of St. Christopher. No further description is necessary.

Anguilla, an island about sixty miles north-west of St. Christopher, is placed under the presidency of the latter, but locally governed by a stipendiary magistrate, paid from the Imperial treasury. It is sixteen miles in length, and varies in breadth from three to 1½ miles. Climate healthy; population computed at 2500; principal productions, phosphate of lime and salt, besides cattle, ponies, and garden stock, which meet with a ready sale at St. Thomas. Total revenue of the island, 555*l.*!

Virgin Islands were discovered by Columbus in 1493, and consist of a cluster of rocks. Only a portion of them belong to Great Britain, the Danes

possessing St. Thomas, St. John, and Sainte Croix, and the Spaniards claiming those nearest to Puerto Rico. The largest island in the group belonging to England is Tortola, which is situated in 18° 27′ N. lat. and 64° 39′ W. long.

The Government consists of an Executive and Legislative Council. Sugar is grown in small quantities, and many of the landed proprietors have recently planted cotton with success. On the 29th October, 1867, the islands were visited by a terrible hurricane, which caused great destruction to life and property. Sir Arthur Rumbold, administrator of St. Kitts, thus describes the calamity, which I extract as a specimen of the visitations to which these islands are frequently subjected:—

"The storm lasted from eleven a.m. to three p.m., but the greatest force was from twelve to two; in that brief space of time two-thirds of the miserable tenements of the town were blown down. The gaol is destroyed; the church, the hospital, pier, school-house, Wesleyan Chapel, and poor-house, are also destroyed; and my own dwelling unroofed and rendered uninhabitable.

"The loss of life cannot as yet be correctly ascertained. I have, however, been officially informed of above twelve deaths in the town, two at

Peter's Island, two at West End; while I hear that a quantity of people are killed in other parts of the country, and scarcely a hut or habitation is left standing.

"All was bright and verdant; the withering blast has passed over it, and not a fruit or other tree remains. The works of the few remaining estates are all totally destroyed."

Another hurricane, in August, 1871, inflicted nearly equal damage.

The islands now belonging to Great Britain were first colonized by a party of Dutch buccaneers, who, about 1648, established themselves on Tortola, but were soon afterwards driven out by English adventurers of the same class, when, ere long, they were attached to the government of the Leeward Islands. It is to be feared that terrible cruelty was practised towards the slaves in Tortola. In 1811 a planter named Hodge was hung for murdering his negroes by slow tortures—a measure that called forth such indignation amongst the whites that the Governor was obliged to proceed in person to Tortola, and proclaim martial law, before the sentence could be executed. This hideous ruffian was a member of Council!

The area of the Virgin Islands—so called after St. Ursula and the eleven thousand maidens—is

fifty-seven square miles, with a population of 6651 souls.

Dominica, an island twenty-nine miles long by sixteen broad, is the most southern of the Leeward group, lying between 15° 20′ and 15° 45′ N. lat., and 61° 13′ and 61° 30′ W. long. It is exceedingly mountainous and picturesque, abounding in rivers and rivulets well stocked with fish, and, with an area of 291 miles, carrying a population of 27,178 souls. Its principal articles of export are cattle, cocoa, lime-juice, molasses, rum, and sugar. The local government is administered by a President, aided by an Executive Council and a Legislative Assembly of fourteen members. The chief town, Roseau, possesses a square, market-place, Government-house and other public buildings, and the streets are spacious and well-paved.

Dominica was discovered by Columbus on Sunday, 3rd November, 1493, from whence it derives its name. This island was included in the patent of 1627, whereby sundry of this group were granted to the Earl of Carlisle; but the French having already colonized it, it continued in their possession—or, more properly speaking, in the possession of its original owners, the Caribs, who suffered the French to establish themselves on its shores.

A few words here concerning this people, who

must not be confounded with the Indian population that disappeared beneath the Spanish yoke. The Caribs were the original inhabitants of the Windward and Leeward Islands—a race of fierce, intractable warriors, who resolutely and pertinaciously opposed the advances of the white men, before whose arrival they had struck terror into the peaceful Indians by their frequent raids; and worse still, by the cannibal propensities with which they were accredited. Whether this stigma still resting on their names—for some philologists derive the word "cannibal" from them—was founded on well-ascertained fact, seems doubtful; but all historians are agreed in describing the Caribs as bold savages, possessed of a powerful *physique*, and quick to resent aggression.

The islands of Dominica and St. Vincent were their last strongholds; but the British Government, weary of the constant disturbances that they occasioned, transported them in a body, in 1796, to Honduras, where they now form a prosperous portion of the community, although still retaining their old language and many of their ancient customs.

By the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, it was stipulated between the English and French that Dominica should be regarded as neutral, and left in the

possession of its rightful owners, the Caribs. Whilst in this professedly "neutral" condition, many Frenchmen quietly settled on the island, and established plantations; in 1756 it became, by conquest, a dependency of Great Britain, and by the treaty of peace signed at Paris in 1763 it was confirmed to this country. Commissioners were sent out, who, after survey, sold the cultivable lands, which yielded to the Crown the sum of 312,092*l.* sterling. Great generosity was manifested towards the French settlers, who were secured in their possessions on condition of taking the oath of allegiance, and paying a small quit-rent. At this time Dominica formed one of a general Government, comprising also St. Vincent, Tobago, Grenada, and the Grenadines. In 1771 it was constituted a separate Government, and four years later a royal proclamation was issued, regulating the franchise and the proceedings at elections, which is in force still.

The opening of the unhappy struggle between England and her North American colonies caused the French to commence hostilities, and attracted by the fertility of Dominica, they made a descent on the island from Martinique, in 1778. There is little doubt that the French inhabitants invited their countrymen over, and furthermore materially aided them by making the few soldiers in charge

of the fort drunk—it was unknown in Dominica that the two nations were at war—and filling the touch-holes of the cannon with sand. This was a poor return for the consideration that had been shown them in 1763. Although the principal fort (Cashacrou) was thus treacherously disabled, the English troops and colonists made a desperate resistance; but on the 7th September (1778) it was found that a further struggle would be useless, and articles of capitulation were signed. The French general left in charge treated the English inhabitants so tyrannically that many of them left the island. In 1783 it was restored to the British, who resisted another French attempt in 1795.

Another and final attack was made by the French in 1805, when an invading army, under General La Grange, landed on each flank of Roseau. The British troops, commanded by Sir George Prevost, fought gallantly, ably seconded by the militia, and by the seamen from the merchant vessels in the port. Unfortunately the town took fire, and was obliged to capitulate; but the governor and such of his forces as remained marched across the island to Prince Rupert's, a position of great strength, where the enemy did not venture to attack him. The French only held Roseau for five days, at the end of which, after levying a heavy

contribution, and destroying the shipping at the anchorage, they re-embarked. This was the last invasion of Dominica, and the inhabitants still date events from *La Grange*, as they term the year 1805.

But although no foreign foe has harassed Dominica since that date, a good deal of trouble was caused by a body of 500 fugitive blacks, who, in 1813-14, established themselves in the mountains, and issuing from their fastnesses, did much damage. They were suppressed with such rigour that Mr. Ainslie, the governor, was recalled to England, there to explain his conduct. In a proclamation he had issued orders that no prisoners were to be taken, but that men, women, and children were to be put to death without exception; furthermore, a reward was offered for every fugitive killed, and the owner of such slave indemnified by the colony. Attila never put forth an order more barbarous, yet in history[1] I find an address presented to this Mr. Ainslie, lauding his clemency, humanity, and other virtues. This veracious document was signed by 162 of the inhabitants of Roseau, the list being headed by the leading clergyman, the rector of St. George.

One more spot must be mentioned when treat-

[1] Southey's "West Indies," vol. iii., p. 556.

ing this group—Barbuda Island, ten miles long by eight broad, low-lying, of coral formation, with a flat and thickly-wooded surface in which deer formerly abounded. Here we find no governor, with councils executive and legislative, for the island belongs to the Codrington family, who have held it under lease from the Crown since 1684, upon the service of presenting a fat sheep to the governor-in-chief whenever he visits its shores. This is usually commuted for a buck or a turtle, the latter reptiles being very abundant on the island. Deer are not so numerous as formerly, much of the undergrowth having disappeared as cultivation extended.

Corn, cotton, sugar, tobacco, and indigo are grown by the 2000 inhabitants settled on the island. It is almost destitute of springs, like Antigua, from which it is distant thirty miles in a northerly direction. The coast is low, and beset by reefs and shoals, but the climate is counted very salubrious, so much so that Barbuda serves as a *sanitorium* for its neighbours.

Sir William Codrington erected a church here in 1843, with a school and school-house.

This quiet little spot closes the list of "The Leeward Islands."

CHAPTER IX.

THE WINDWARD ISLANDS AND TRINIDAD.

THE Windward group forms the southern segment of the chain enclosing the Caribbean Sea, and consists of the following islands:—Barbados, St. Vincent, Tobago, and St. Lucia.

Barbados, an island twenty-one miles in length by fourteen in breadth, lies considerably to the eastward of the remainder of the Windward group, being seventy-eight miles distant from St. Vincent. With an area of 166 square miles, it supports a population of 180,000 souls. It is divided into eleven parishes, in the principal of which (St. Michael), Bridgetown, the chief city and port, is situated. This town contains nearly 19,000 inhabitants. The island is the seat of a bishopric, and finds employment for forty-four clergymen of the Church of England. It also possesses a college and many fine public buildings. Being almost

encircled by coral reefs, the seas in its neighbourhood are very dangerous to navigators.

The principal produce of Barbados is sugar, over 500 plantations flourishing at the present time, and yielding in 1876 the enormous quantity of 37,848 hogsheads of sugar, and 24,001 puncheons of molasses. The population being so great, labour is cheap and abundant, whilst the productive capacity of the soil having been fully developed, the island has the appearance of a well-kept garden, intersected throughout by excellent roads. Table-land, low-land, hill and valley, are presented on a limited scale; several streams, undeserving the name of rivers, exist, and the geological formation of the island is coralline.

The local government of Barbados consists of a Governor (also Governor-in-Chief of the other Windward Islands), an Executive Council, and a House of Assembly, composed of twenty-four members elected annually.

The island first appears marked on the charts in 1600, and its earliest known visitors were the Portuguese, who finding it uninhabited, named it *Los Barbados*, or "The Bearded," from the number of wild fig-trees with fibrous roots that they thought resembled human beards. It was colonized by the English in 1625, and, unlike most of the other

islands in these seas, has never changed owners. Its history, consequently, is entirely local, and need not be entered upon in a sketch so brief as this. Sir Robert Schomburgk has published an exhaustive work on Barbados.

St. Vincent was discovered by Columbus in 1498. It is an island of eighteen miles in length by eleven in breadth, with an area of 147 square miles, supporting a population of 35,688 souls; Kingstown is the name of the capital. The principal exports are arrowroot, cotton, sugar, rum, and molasses. The affairs of the island are administered by a lieutenant-governor and a single Legislative Assembly composed of twelve members. Some of the Grenadine isles are attached to the government of St. Vincent.

The surface of this island is undulating, and admirably adapted for the growth of the sugar-cane, the soil consisting of a rich tenacious mould. Its geological character is decidedly volcanic, and its most striking physical peculiarity is a mountain rising 3000 feet above the level of the sea, situated at the northern extremity of the island, named the Souffrière. A terrific eruption took place here in 1812, when much property and many lives were destroyed.

The history of St. Vincent shows the usual

vicissitudes common to these islands. Colonized by the English, it was for some time in the possession of their enemies, the French, and was one of the places declared neutral by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. The Caribs committed much havoc until removed to Honduras in 1796; and severe hurricanes, in addition to the volcanic eruption mentioned above, have retarded the progress of the island. By the Treaty of Versailles in 1783 St. Vincent became a portion of the British Empire.

Grenada, an island twenty-one miles in length by twelve in breadth, was discovered by Columbus in 1498; and, possessing an area of 133 square miles, supports a population numbering 40,412 souls.

Tobago, an island thirty-two miles in length by from six to twelve in breadth, was also discovered by Columbus in 1498. It has an area of 114 square miles, with a population of 17,054, of whom only about 120 persons are white.

St. Lucia, a large island forty-two miles in length by twenty-one at its greatest breadth, owes its discovery to Columbus in 1502. With an area of 237 square miles, the census of 1871 returns its population at 31,610 souls.

These three last-named islands have nothing to

distinguish them either in physical aspect, form of government, or history, from others of the same group, and the constant repetition of local details would prove most wearisome to the general reader. The statistics at the conclusion of this sketch will afford the latest information extant on the exports and imports of both the Windward and Leeward Islands. The reader desiring more minute particulars will find every prominent event in the history of this group most admirably set forth in Martin's publication, "The British Colonies," and in the Parliamentary Blue Books.

The Island of Trinidad.

This large and valuable island, the most southerly of the British possessions in the West Indies, is situated between latitudes 10° 3′ and 10° 51′ N., and longitude 61° and 62° 4′ W. It lies to the eastward of Venezuela, from which it is separated by the Gulf of Paria, and is of an oblong shape, which has not inaptly been compared to an extended ox-hide, with promontories at three corners. Its length is sixty-five miles on the southern and fifty-three miles on the northern side of the island; and its breadth, on the eastern and western sides respectively, forty-eight and forty-nine miles. Its north-

western point is distant thirteen miles from the continent, its south-western promontory only nine miles; the northern mouths of the mighty river Orinoco fall into the Gulf of Paria opposite to Trinidad.

The area of the island is computed at 1754½ square miles, and its population in 1871 amounted to 109,638, being an increase of thirty per cent. in the space of ten years. Port of Spain, the capital, is a fine town, built of stone, with long, wide streets, that extend inland in parallel lines from the sea, and are intersected by other thoroughfares at right angles, the principal of which are planted with shady trees. It contains 23,561 inhabitants. The town and port of next importance is San Fernando, about thirty miles south from the capital. St. Joseph, Tacarigua, Arouca, and Arima, are minor inland towns. The Gulf of Paria forms the finest harbour in the West Indies, capable of holding the navies of the whole world, but the water runs shallow towards the island.

The northern part of Trinidad is mountainous, a range, averaging from 2000 to 3000 feet in height, running across the island from east to west; this chain was evidently, in ages past, connected with the Cumana Mountains on the mainland. The rest of the island consists of plains and undulating

country, although towards its centre a double-peaked hill arises. Its geological structure is diversified, in consequence of which it presents a great variety of soil and vegetation. The northern hills are chiefly composed of rocks of the paleozoic period; the central mountain is partly older cretaceous, and the remainder of the island includes a very complete series of tertiary rocks, eocene, miocene, pliocene, and postpliocene. The mineralogical composition of the strata is still more varied, and includes almost every kind—except those belonging to the igneous series, which are not represented in Trinidad. This variety of soil produces an equally diversified vegetation, which, owing to the heat and humidity of the climate, is almost always luxuriant. The northern range is clothed from summit to base with noble forests, the mangroves on the beach actually growing in the water. The plains and vales produce the sugar-cane, together with cocoa, coffee, cotton, and various kinds of timber, besides a profusion of West Indian fruit. The total amount of land under cultivation, according to the assessment of 1874, was 91,645 acres, as follows:—Canes, 49,877 acres; cocoa and coffee, 17,828 acres; ground provisions, 17,393 acres; cocoa-nuts, 2064 acres; pasture, 6547 acres.

The government is administered by a Governor and an Executive Council of three members. The Legislative Body is a Council, including the governor, who is president, six official and eight unofficial members, all of whom are nominated by the Crown.

All the public institutions of Trinidad are good; such as the post-office, which has a very complete service; and the police, a strong and efficient force. Two general hospitals, a lunatic asylum, a leper asylum, a wash-house, a bath-house, and a house of refuge, are kept up at the public expense; the military barracks, erected at a cost of 80,000*l.*, are spacious and commodious; as are also the police barracks. Indeed Trinidad may be pronounced a very forward colony, the only matter in which she is backward being the condition of the roads running into the interior. The highways, such as they are, are mostly narrow, devoid of footwalks, and for many weary miles without a single tree which might afford shelter to man or beast, who are thus exposed to the fierce rays of a blazing tropical sun, the direct effects of which are heightened by the scarcely less pernicious ones of reflection and radiation from all the surfaces. Trinidad should take a lesson from Barbados in this respect.

The educational scheme adopted in the island is also very good. There are two colleges, the Queen's Royal College, and the College of the Immaculate Conception, which are connected, and afford instruction to 190 students. The number of primary schools under inspection is eighty-two, with 7292 scholars.

In 1498, the three vessels under the orders of Columbus being in danger of foundering from leakage, the admiral determined to name the first land that he encountered after the Holy Trinity; in this strait he fell in with the island of Trinidad, and it has since retained the title he then bestowed upon it. No attempt was made at colonization by the Spaniards until 1588,[1] although, previous to that time, they had been in the habit of calling at the island for wood and water, as well as for the purpose of carrying off the inhabitants as slaves to Hispaniola. The French gained possession of it for a short time in 1676, but it was soon restored to Spain.

On the 12th February, 1797, a British fleet, under Admiral Harvey, having on board nearly 7000 troops, commanded by General Abercrombie, sailed from Martinique for the reduction of Tri-

[1] Martin makes the date of colonization 1532, but I have inserted that given by the Colonial Office.

nidad. The resistance was small; the Spanish war-ships in the harbour of Port of Spain were either burnt or captured, and Don Chacon capitulated. Two months later Abercrombie quitted the island, leaving his aide-de-camp, Lieut.-Colonel Picton, in charge. The greatest anarchy prevailed, and the natives were treated with much rigour by the new governor. On the 29th March, 1802, the definitive but short-lived treaty of peace between England and France and her allies, was signed at Amiens; and by this instrument all places taken during the war by Great Britain were resigned, except Ceylon and Trinidad.

In 1805 the garrison of Trinidad beheld a heart-stirring sight. At daybreak the officer in command of the single martello tower standing on the northern promontory saw the horizon white with many sails. Nearer and nearer they approached—an overwhelming force—and concluding that it was the combined French and Spanish fleet, bent on the destruction of the settlement, the officer pitched his solitary gun down the cliffs, blew up the tower, and hurried off to report the advance of the enemy. Fast as the favouring breeze could speed them, the hostile armament flew on, a giant three-decked vessel leading the way. But as the distance lessened, the anxious garrison could distinguish the banner

of St. George, and knew that they had then no foe to fear. It was the lion of England seeking his prey! The huge ship leading the van was the "Victory," and on her poop stood Lord Nelson, looking hungrily for the foe that for so many months had eluded his pursuit. Misled by reports, he thought the island had fallen into the hands of France and Spain, and that he should find their combined fleet anchored in the Gulf of Paria. On discovering his error the great admiral never relinquished for one hour the task before him. Without reducing a stitch of canvas, without throwing even a note into a passing canoe, he and his gallant following of wooden leviathans swept out to seaward, continuing, with the pertinacity of sleuth-hounds, a chase that terminated only on the 21st October, off Trafalgar's Cape.

Trinidad is celebrated for containing a great natural curiosity, in the shape of a lake of pitch; and no visitor to the island fails to view a phenomenon of which he has probably heard since childhood.

About forty miles south of Port of Spain, upon a projecting tongue of land, stands the village of La Braye, and about three-quarters of a mile inland of this is found the pitch lake. This substance abounds in the vicinity, and the village

actually owes its existence to the fact that the waves of the Gulf make but little impression on the hardened pitch that forms its foundation. Some inconvenience is, however, caused to the inhabitants by the constant elevation or depression of their houses, which if built of stone would probably be swallowed up, but, constructed of light woodwork, they yield to the subterranean commotions without collapsing. The lake lies ninety-six feet above the level of the sea, and to reach it a glacier of pitch must be ascended, when the visitor sees lying before him a black and circular plain, half a mile in diameter, and surrounded by a dense wall of forest, in which various species of tall palms are most conspicuous. He has reached his destination.

Mr. Manross, in the "American Journal of Science and Arts,"[2] has given an excellent account of this curious place. He says: "The lake itself is entirely bare of vegetation, except about twenty small clumps of trees, which are arranged in a sort of broken circle about half-way from the centre to the circumference.

"On a closer inspection, the entire surface of this circular plain is seen to be intersected by a network of water-channels. Its appearance is exactly that

[2] Vol. xx., p. 153.

of marbled-paper. The pitch is divided into flat, or slightly convex areas, mostly polygonal, but sometimes circular. They vary from one to eight rods in diameter. The intervening spaces are full of water. At the time of my visit, which was in the month of May, and just at the close of the dry season, the water was so far reduced that it was easy to pass over all parts of the lake by leaping the channels. At other seasons this is more difficult.

"These channels have hitherto been described as crevices, or cracks in the pitch. This description is, however, incorrect, for the material, although apparently almost as hard as stone, is yet far too plastic to admit of anything like a fissure remaining open in it. Excavations from which many tons of pitch have been taken for exportation, are closed up again in the course of a few days or weeks, not by streams of pitch flowing into them, but by the gradual closing in of the sides and bottom.

"The channels are produced and maintained by the following singular process:—Each of the many hundred areas into which the lake is divided possesses an independent revolving motion in this wise: in the centre of the area the pitch is constantly rising up—not breaking out in streams, but rising *en masse*. It is thus constantly displacing

that which previously occupied the centre, and forcing it towards the circumference. The surface becomes covered with concentric wrinkles, and the interior structure somewhat laminated, while the upper laminæ at the centre of the area are torn into shreds by the expansion, like the outer bark of a rapidly growing tree. When the edge of such an expanding area meets that of the adjoining one the pitch rolls under, to be thrown up again at some future period. The material is rarely soft enough to meet and form a close joint at the top, but descends with a rounded edge, and at a considerable angle. The spaces thus left between the different areas are often five or six feet deep, and three or four yards wide at the top, diminishing, of course, to a mere seam at the bottom. When three or more of them meet, a star-shaped cavity is formed, in some cases twelve or fourteen feet deep.

"It is difficult to conceive of a motion like this going on in a material almost of stony hardness, but that such a revolution is constantly taking place over the entire surface of this lake cannot be doubted.

"Another curious proof of it is afforded by numerous pieces of wood which, being involved in the pitch, are constantly coming to the surface. They are often several feet in length, and five or

six inches in diameter. On reaching the surface they generally assume an upright position, one end being detained in the pitch, while the other is elevated by the lifting of the middle. They may be seen at frequent intervals all over the lake, standing up to the height of two or even three feet. They look like stumps of trees, protruding through the pitch, but their parvenu character is curiously betrayed by a ragged cap of pitch, which invariably covers the top, and hangs down like hounds' ears on either side.

"The conclusion, then, to which a close observation leads us in regard to the present condition of this singular lake, is, not that it has suddenly cooled down from a boiling state, as heretofore described, but that, solid as the material is, it is still boiling, although with an indefinitely slow motion. As the descent of the glacier may be considered the slowest instance of flowing in nature, so the revolution of the scarcely less solid bitumen of this lake may be set down as the slowest example of ebullition.

"The water which fills the crevices of the pitch is clear and very pure, especially towards the margin of the lake. It is the favourite resort of all the washerwomen for miles around."

Mr. Manross continues: "The vicinity of the pitch, with its strong odour, seems to give no more

offence to animals than its presence in the soil does to vegetation. Numerous fishes, ten or twelve inches long, were seen in the waters of the lake. An alligator shuffled off from one of the areas on my approach. In two instances I scared birds resembling night-hawks from their nests—or rather from their eggs, which were deposited upon the naked pitch."

To the south-west of the lake a large spring of petroleum is found, and twenty miles to the southward of La Braye, at a place called Cadras, are several mud volcanoes, which cast up water, mud, burnt wood, rounded pebbles, &c.

The bitumen from the Pitch Lake is mixed with gravel, and used to pave the floors of the houses at Port of Spain and elsewhere; it is also employed as fuel by the American steamers plying on the Orinoco, being thrown into the furnaces in company with wood; if used alone it fuses too readily. I have quoted at considerable length from Mr. Manross's paper, but the accuracy of his description, and the ingenuity of his theory—which differs from preceding writers—will, I hope, prove a valid excuse.

CHAPTER X.

THE BERMUDAS, OR SOMERS ISLANDS.

FROM the depths of the North Atlantic Ocean, at a distance of 580 miles from the nearest land—Cape Hatteras, in North Carolina—the minute coral zoophytes have reared a cluster of islands, said to be equal in number to the days of the year. This group is named the Bermudas, or Somers Islands, and its position is in lat. 32° 15′ N., and long. 64° 51′ W.

Perhaps, from a strictly geographical point of view, it is hardly correct to include the Bermudas in a sketch of the West Indies; but if not actually belonging to the Antilles, they bear the same relation to them that a strong but distant fortress does to the town from which it is invisible, but over which, in reality, it stands as a guard and protector. The Bermudas are, in fact, the key to the West Indies; possessing a grand harbour, in which our fleet may revictual or refit; in which our rich

traders may find a refuge from an enemy's cruisers, and constituting a station adapted alike for defending British interests and harassing those of an opponent. In view of the important *rôle* these obscure islands are called upon to fill, military skill has left no means untried to strengthen naturally strong positions; until now, this—our Malta of the West—may be regarded as impregnable. The great American hero recognized their value. "Let us annex the Bermudas, and thus possess a nest of hornets to annoy the British trade," wrote George Washington; but it was not to be! English statesmen had also foreseen the vast importance of the station, and the Union Jack already waved above the Somers group.

The islands forming the Bermudas extend in a crooked chain—much resembling a long-shanked fish-hook—for about twenty miles in length, their breadth varying from two miles to a furlong. The parliamentary return gives their area as nineteen square miles, with an estimated population of 13,302. Only a few of the group are inhabited, the vast majority consisting of small patches of bare rock, scarcely elevated above the sea. The principal islands are *St. George's*, three miles in length; *Bermuda*, fifteen; *Somerset*, three; and *Ireland*, three. Amongst the minor islands may be

mentioned *St. David's, Cooper's, Nonsuch, Godet's, Port's,* and *River's;* besides *Boaz* and *Watford* islands—the two latter occupied as a military station. The small islands, dotted about amongst their larger fellows, form several magnificent harbours, and a multitude of picturesque bays and creeks; amongst the former are *Castle Harbour, Great Sound,* and *Harrington Sound.* The numerous rocks and patches jutting up from the deep render a pilot necessary to the mariner, but are filled with interesting material for the naturalist and geologist. Peering over the side of a boat, the bottom of the sea looks like a brilliant flower-garden, and from the clearness of the water the smallest motion of the many-coloured fish, roaming through the delicate fronds of coral, may be distinctly observed. There, side by side with the sea-rod—resembling ebony, yet tough as whalebone—is seen the sea-fan, spreading its lilac network to catch the eye; and further on the sea-feather, waving gracefully above the humble oyster, in which, however, is frequently enclosed a rich treasure, for the pearls of this part are highly prized. None of the archipelago attain a height exceeding 250 feet; thus mountain grandeur is absent from the scenery, but it has a beauty entirely of its own.

Of coralline formation, the islands consist entirely of white granular limestone in various degrees of hardness. This forms an excellent building material, and is easily wrought by axes and saws. Soft at first, when exposed to the atmosphere it changes colour from white to grey, and assumes a greater consistency, withstanding rain and damp, when covered over with cement. The whole group is in a state of subsidence, and not of elevation. The hilly parts of the islands consist of a calcareous sand, forming, through the action of water, an incrustation of lime, hard and half an inch in thickness. The caves peculiar to this formation exist, some of them running back a considerable depth, and forming a pleasant retreat for picnic parties.

The soil generally consists of a red earth, mixed with sand and vegetable matter; but in swampy places a peaty substance is found, and in some localities a light sandy soil, particularly adapted for the growth of potatoes and onions. So rapid is the vegetation that the islands are clad in a mantle of perpetual verdure, for the climate is such that in winter the European seeds germinate, and in summer the tropical produce comes forward; so that there is never an interregnum of any consequence. Timber is abundant, consisting chiefly of

the Bermudas cedar, whose fragrance is so well known to all who have ever visited the group. This tree is in reality a species of juniper, but it grows to a size considerable enough to furnish timber for the construction of small vessels, and ship-building is the favourite employment of the inhabitants. The prickly pear flourishes throughout the islands, as well as esculent roots; wherever the ground remains uncultivated the sage-bush springs up in great profusion. The citron, orange, and lime grows wild; and the castor-oil plant, aloe, and jalap are also of spontaneous growth.

Hamilton, the present seat of government, is situated on the main island, by the shores of Hamilton Harbour, an inlet of Great Sound. It is of small extent as a town, but very convenient for trade, as vessels of large size can be secured alongside the wharves. Numerous small fishing communities are dispersed about the creeks and bays. St. George's Island formerly contained the seat of government, but is now the military station of the colony. Forts of great strength command the entrance to the harbour, which is completely land-locked, and accessible only by a narrow and intricate channel. On Ireland Island is situated the Royal Dockyard, an establishment now ren-

dered complete by a huge floating dock, towed out from England, at great risk, in 1869.

Not a single spring or river exists amongst the whole group, the inhabitants drawing their supply of water entirely from tanks dependent on the rainfall. Communication between the different islands is facilitated by strong and well-built bridges.

The climate of the Bermudas has been lauded by some writers for its salubrity, and unjustly decried by others. Its mildness is undeniable, resembling that of Persia, subdued by the constant sea-breeze; and its healthiness is generally above the average, although epidemics occasionally occur and commit great havoc.

The government is administered by a governor and a privy council, consisting of nine members appointed by the Crown, who also act as a Legislative Council. There is also a House of Assembly of thirty-six members, consisting of four representatives from each parish; all these gentlemen receive payment for their attendance. From 1844 to 1877 the Bermudas were annexed to the episcopal diocese of Newfoundland, but at present there is no bishop. Most of the inhabitants are members of the Church of England.

The principal articles of export are arrowroot,

onions, potatoes, and tomatoes, by far the greater majority of which find a market in the United States.

The Bermudas are commonly said to have been discovered in 1527 by a Spaniard named Juan

Camber and Floating Dock, Bermuda.

Bermudas, who, whilst on a voyage from Spain to Cuba with a cargo of hogs, was wrecked upon the group, when the live stock swam ashore, multiplied, and became quite wild. An Englishman named

Henry May has left us an account of how, in 1593, a French ship in which he served becoming entangled in the treacherous coral reefs was beaten to pieces, when twenty-seven men escaped to land. They found the islands uninhabited, but abounding in hogs; and having thus sufficient provision, the castaways set to work ship-building. With material obtained from the wreck they fashioned a cedar bark of eighteen tons burden, showing much skill in overcoming difficulties; for they caulked their craft with a mixture of lime and turtle-oil, and then, in default of any better substance, rendered her water-tight with a sheathing of cement. Hogs and turtle provisioned their vessel, and they used the tops of palmetto-berries for bread. On the 11th May, 1594, after a residence of five months, they quitted the islands, and were picked up by a vessel off the coast of Newfoundland.

Shipwreck seems indissolubly connected with he history of "the vexed Bermoothes," for the next we hear of them is from a party of compulsory visitors. In 1609 a fleet of nine vessels, under the command of Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers, sailed from Plymouth Sound for Virginia, of which territory Gates was appointed governor, whilst Somers was admiral of the seas

A terrible tempest separated the ship carrying the two knights—the "Sea Venture"—from the others, and after pumping and baling for three nights, in hourly expectation of going to the bottom, they fell in with land and beached their crazy vessel, by great good fortune in a spot which permitted of the whole party, numbering 150, being landed without loss of life. The nameless historian of this event quaintly writes:—"We now found we had reached a dangerous and dreaded island, or rather islands, called the Bermudas, considered terrible by all who have touched at them; and from the dreadful tempests, thunder, and other alarming events prevailing, are commonly called the devil's islands. Owing to such dangers navigators anxiously avoid them."

In this report we see the hand of the Spaniards—a *ruse* employed by those people to prevent other nations from colonizing the group.

After settling down a little the wrecked men decked the long-boat, which they had saved, and sent her to Virginia for assistance, under the charge of the mate, but she was never heard of again. Whilst waiting for her return, Sir George Somers, who although a very old man seems to have had more energy than any of the party, proposed building a bark, a task that was accordingly begun.

The hogs, turtle, fish, and an endless supply of birds, served them for food. Our mariner says : "There were great numbers of birds, some very tame, and among them a kind of web-footed fowl like a green plover, or sea-gull. Flocks collecting together, breed in the islands so far in the sea, that the hogs cannot swim over to them, and they burrow in the ground like rabbits in a warren, though not so deep. With a firebrand in a dark night we have taken 300 in an hour. If the men standing by the beach made a great shouting and noise, the birds would flock around answering it, and settle on their legs and arms."

But the company, both landsmen and mariners, soon became a source of great trouble and anxiety to the knights, plotting desertion and committing various other offences highly subversive of discipline. Once or twice mutineers were haled before the governor, and matters would have gone hard with them had their comrades not begged them off. At last matters became so bad that a strict watch was set over the disaffected. In the words of the narrator,—"The sentinels and night guards were doubled, and all the avenues carefully overlooked, by which further attempts were repressed until the 13th of March, that one Henry Paine, a gentleman, who full of mischief and hourly devising

something or other, abstracted swords, tools, and the like, to suit his own evil ends. On being called by the captain to attend the night watch in his turn, he not only insulted but struck him; and being prevented from closing with him, abandoned his post with contumelious expressions respecting the governor."

These words, after becoming the subject of common conversation, were repeated to the governor, who considered them and his whole conduct of the most dangerous example and tendency. Therefore having summoned Paine, who was already one of the conspirators, to his presence, and convicted him before the colony, he condemned him to be instantly hanged. After the ladder was prepared, the culprit, having made many confessions, earnestly requested that, as he was a gentleman, he might be shot, which request being granted, he was put to death at sunset."

Fearing that he had betrayed them, the conspirators to whom Paine was allied deserted *en masse* to another island, but in course of time were induced to return on the persuasion of stout old Sir George Somers, only two men proving recalcitrant. Meanwhile the ship-building had progressed, and a bark and pinnace large enough to carry the whole company were ready by May.

The former vessel, named the "Deliverance," was forty feet in the keel, and her beams made from the oak of the wreck; her capacity was estimated at eighty tons. The pinnace constructed by Somers was smaller.

On the 18th of May the whole company—with the exception of the two mutineers mentioned above—repaired on board the little vessels, and bade adieu to the scene of their disaster, reaching Virginia in safety.

Some time afterwards the colony (Virginia) being greatly straitened for provisions, old Sir George Somers—then aged eighty—volunteered to bring a cargo of hogs from the Bermudas, and sailed in a vessel of only thirty tons for that purpose. He reached the group which bears his name, but privation and exhaustion were too much for him, and the old knight died at St. George's, exhorting his nephew and crew to return with relief to Virginia. His body was embalmed and taken to England, but his heart found a last resting-place at the Bermudas. This is a curious old chapter of history, and so little known that I have dwelt upon it at some length.

Sir George Somers' nephew did not carry out his uncle's wishes by returning straight to Virginia, t sailed instead for England, where the account

he gave of the islands caused the Virginia Company to claim them, which they did under a charter granted by James I. in 1612. This association parted with their right to the Bermuda Company, who in 1616 obtained a new charter and extended privileges. Representative government was introduced in 1620. During the Commonwealth troubles great numbers of people flocked to the Bermudas to escape the destructions of the mother country, and soon grave rumours of mismanagement by the company reached England. Complaints of such a nature were at length made that in 1864-85, by the process of *quo warranto*, the company's charter was annulled, and since that date the governors have always been appointed by the Crown, and the laws of the colony enacted by a local Legislature, consisting of the Governor, Council, and Assembly.

During the revolutionary war in North America the inhabitants suffered greatly from want of food, being dependent on foreign supplies for all the flour and meat they consume, although they can send certain agricultural products to other countries. Early in the present century the importance of the Bermudas as a naval station was recognized, and Ireland Island purchased for a dockyard. The colony was also, in 1824, declared a convict establishment, but was never a penal settlement, where

prisoners might be discharged. This establishment was broken up in 1863.

The history of slavery in the Bermudas is the same as in Jamaica or the other West Indian Islands.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ISLANDS OF CUBA AND PUERTO RICO.

I HAVE thus laid before the reader a short account of the British West Indian possessions, and I now turn to Spain, the power to whom Cuba and Puerto Rico—two of the finest islands in the Antilles—belong. After the slight glimpse that we have obtained in the foregoing pages, of a monstrous injustice tardily recognized, but then atoned for by the gift of absolute freedom to thousands of miserable Africans in a state of enforced servitude, it seems a painfully retrograde movement to record the history of colonies where the plague-spot of slavery still flourishes. Degenerate, corrupt, rotten, but still wrapped about in the ragged mantle of a spurious pride that only subjects its wearer to humiliation, Spain the Catholic, Spain the devout, has thought fit to adhere to this iniquitous custom, when the remainder of Europe, moved by one generous and righteous impulse, has effaced the

blot that sullied its escutcheon. Even semi-barbarian Russia was less slow to move than a nation that for centuries has prided herself on her chivalry, her literature, and her art. Let us grant that an abolition bill is even now before the Cortes, the stubborn opposition offered to the measure becoming law is proof in itself that the heart of the nation does not beat in approval of an act of justice. Perhaps before these pages have passed through the press slavery may no longer exist throughout the Spanish colonies; but the reparation will have been wrung from the reluctant donors by the grave representations and warnings of their neighbours, not by any spontaneous movement, any consciousness of deep shame, such as would stir a generous community into action. But perhaps it is wrong too closely to scrutinize the motives, provided only the good deed be done; the movement in itself shows some semi-awakening from the torpor into which the once great empire has sunk. Let us hope that when Spain abolishes slavery, the tonic effect of one good action will prove to her people that it should not be their last.

Cuba, known by the Spaniards under a variety of endearing epithets, such as "the Garden of the West," "the Summer Isle of Eden," &c., the largest of the West India islands, measures from Cape

Magai on the east to Cape Antonio on the west, a distance of 790 miles. It lies between 19° and 23° N. lat., and 74° and 85° W. long., having a breadth varying from twenty-eight to 127 miles, a coast line of 1719 miles, and an area of about 55,000 square miles; including the adjacent islands and cays its total area is 64,000 square miles.

In form Cuba is very irregular, approaching that of a long narrow crescent, the convex portion of which lies towards the north. It is the most westerly of the West Indian islands, dividing the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico into two channels, that to the north-west being 124 miles wide; the other to the south-west 97½ miles in its narrowest part. The nearest of the Bahamas lies forty-five miles north of the coast of Cuba. Only one-third of the whole extensive coast-line is accessible to vessels, banks, reefs, and rocks shutting out the remainder. The shores are usually low and flat, which subjects them to frequent floods and inundations, but numerous harbours are found, into which ships of large tonnage can enter.

Only the south-eastern part of the island is mountainous. There a range called the "Sierra," "Montaños de Maestra" or "Cobre," rises more than 7000 feet above the level of the sea, the Pico de Tarquino, the loftiest point, attaining a height of

nearly 8000 feet. A few minor mountains occur towards the west, such as the "Pico de Potrerillo," near Trinidad, the "Loma de San Juan," "El Pan de Guajaibon," and the "Pan de Matanzas," the latter being usually the first land sighted by vessels approaching from the north. Most of these mountains present a constant robe of verdure, being wooded to their very summits; minerals, especially copper, are found on their sides; together with chalybeate waters that enjoy a great reputation for the cure of disease.

Owing to the narrow dimensions of the island, and the fact that the rivers all flow either north or south, they possess but a very short course, and are only navigable for a few miles by small boats; but they are of great service in irrigating the plantations, and afford a bountiful supply of pure fresh water, highly esteemed for drinking purposes.

The mountainous part of Cuba, towards the south-east, is formed of a calcareous mass, resting on a schistose formation, and the vegetable soil of the high land is dispersed almost universally above one great mass of calcareous rock, of a porous and unequal character. Near the middle of the north coast a slaty formation is to be seen, on which the calcareous rock seems to rest. The fertility of the soil is

a bye-word throughout the Antilles, and sufficiently evidenced by the forest growth. It is estimated that 2,000,000 of acres of virgin forest still remain untouched by the axe, and awaiting only the hand of man to turn it into a productive garden. Timber of fine growth abounds, such as the mahogany, cedar, a species of ebony and magnificent pines. Fruits attain the greatest perfection, more especially the tropical varieties, and esculent roots are universally cultivated, whilst the maize or Indian corn is indigenous. The chief agricultural products are sugar, coffee, and tobacco.

The island of Cuba, with the adjacent small isles and keys, is divided into six administrative territorial parts, known as Judicial, Political, Military, Ecclesiastical, Maritime, and Economical or "*Real Hacienda.*"

The judicial division, comprising the whole island, is further subdivided into twenty-six judicial districts, over each of which is placed an "alcalde mayor" or judge, having for his auxiliaries the ordinary "alcaldes" (local judges). The superior tribunal, the "Real Audiencia," holds its sessions at Havannah, and to this court any person can appeal from the decisions of the lower authorities, whilst it is moreover a species of Council of State, which the Captain-General consults upon all difficult

matters of administration, as well as upon laws, concessions, &c.

Politically the island is composed of a single province, under the control of a Superior Governor, who is at the same time Captain-Ceneral. It is again subdivided into four political governments (*Gobiernos Politicos*) or lieutenancies, which are further split up into "*Gobiernos*" and captaincies. There are thirty-one political districts, each of which has an "*Ayuntamiento*" or town-council, at the head of affairs.

The military division likewise includes the whole island, and constitutes a Captaincy-General. It is divided into two compartments, with Havannah for its capital in the west, and Santiago-de Cuba in the east; the former under the command of the Captain-General, the latter under the Governor of Cuba. Each department consists of *gobiernos*, military districts, and districts of arms. The boundary between these two divisions cuts the island in half, commencing from the mouth of the brook Yana, abreast of Yuriguano, and terminating at Sabana-la-Mar. It also marks the limits of the two dioceses and of the political government.

The ecclesiastical government consists of the archbishopric of Cuba and the bishopric of Havannah, the two dioceses being separated as above.

The maritime division is divided into five provinces—Havannah, Trinidad, San Juan de los Remedios, Nuevitas, and Cuba, the whole being subject to a commander-general.

The economical or royal property department is controlled by a superintendent-general.

As Cuba is the most important of the Spanish colonies, its captain-general cannot be of lower rank than a lieutenant-general in the army, and the post is one of great power, for the authority of this official is almost despotic. The appointment rests with the Crown, subject to the approval of the ministry, and the term of office is from three to five years, with a fixed salary of 10,000*l.* per annum, although that sum does not represent a third of the emoluments that accrue to the holder from various and questionable sources. The captain-general has the entire disposal of the forces, both land and sea, and is, in fact, a viceroy, armed with more than the usual powers of that position, for he can suspend officials at will, and is answerable to the Peninsula government alone In cases of emergency he convokes a council, consisting of the officer commanding the navy, the regent of the audiencia, and the Bishop of Havannah, and any law they promulgate can only be revoked by the home government. On certain days he

gives audiences, when all persons may freely approach for the purpose of stating their grievances. Whether these unfortunates obtain redress seems a little doubtful, for a writer remarks that he takes care "not to grant petitions signed by more than three neighbours at a time, an occurrence which is looked upon and punished as sedition."[1]

The municipal administration need hardly be entered into, for all its power is really vested in the hands of the all-absorbing captain-general. The taxes of this department, called "*proprios*" and "*arbitrios*" consist of a poll-tax, of taxes upon property, industry and commerce; upon all vendors, markets, stores, and itinerant trades; upon conveyances, public and private; upon every single article, profession, or calling, in short, from which money can on any pretext be extorted. The sums thus obtained are expended in lighting the towns, supporting the police, prisons, prisoners, &c.

The capital of Cuba is Havannah (Havana), a large town, with a magnificent harbour, situated on the north coast of the island. It is walled, and the intramural portion is composed of narrow, dirty, ill-savoured and totally undrained streets, together with a cathedral, the palace of the captain-general, and an opera-house. A traveller says:

[1] "Cuba with Pen and Pencil," by Samuel Hazard.

"The cathedral is as devoid of beauty, both externally and internally, as such an edifice can be made. To describe such a building would be an absurd waste of time and patience. We all know what is a large Roman Catholic church, built in the worst taste, and by a combination of the lowest attributes of Gothic and Latin architecture. The palace, having been built for a residence, does not appear so utterly vile, though it is the child of some similar father." Outside the wall is a road called the Paseo, ornamented with an avenue of trees, and provided with seats, whereon numerous spectators assemble to see the beauty of Cuba drive past in curious vehicles called volantes. These consist of a pair of huge wheels, before which a hooded body, capable of holding two persons, is slung. The shafts are fourteen feet in length, so that nearly three yards of space intervenes between the carriage proper and the quadruped. The latter, besides the entire weight of this awkward arrangement, has to carry the driver, usually a huge negro attired in gorgeous livery. One would think that common sense might suggest some vehicle better adapted for turning the corners of narrow streets, but the people of Spanish descent are very conservative. So proud are their owners of these uncouth equipages, that they actually keep

them in the drawing, or dining-room, instead of relegating them to the stable.

Cuba possesses some beautiful caves, notably those at Bellamar, some two miles and a half from the city of Matanzas. These extend for three miles beneath the surface of the earth, and are partially lighted up with gas to give the visitor a good view of their splendours. Speaking of the main chamber, Mr. Hazard says, "This temple, I should think, is quite 200 feet long, and about seventy wide, and is about 150 feet from the entrance of the cave; and while it far surpasses in richness and splendour the temple of the same name in the Mammoth Cave, it does not equal it in size or solemn grandeur." The sparkling columns of crystal produce a most wonderful effect, their colours changing, when a light is held behind them, from white to amber, warmed up by lovely rose tints. Each of these shafts has a name, one "the Mantle of Columbus," another "the Guardian Spirit," and so on. The caves were accidentally discovered some twenty years ago, by a labourer losing his tool down a hole, which further search revealed to be an opening into this fairy grotto.

Cuba, from her mountains, has a tolerably healthy climate inland, though her sea coasts are ravaged by epidemic diseases; but, in addition to

this, there is yearly danger of hurricanes and hourly danger of an earthquake. On the 10th October, 1846, the barometer fell very rapidly, a north-easterly breeze freshened into a gale, which augmented in force until a hurricane, such as had never been heard of within the memory of man, was blowing. Huge rollers swept in, carrying vessels on their crests, and dashing them to atoms on the shore ; trees, chimneys, every description of property, was driven before the might of the wind. During its terrible career it demolished 1872 houses, and sank 216 vessels, besides seriously damaging sixty or seventy more. The Coliseo theatre in Havannah was completely destroyed, large tracts of country laid waste, and hundreds of people were killed or seriously injured. The full force of the hurricane seemed to centre itself on the capital and its environs—a fact which largely increased the long list of casualties.

The island of Cuba was discovered by Columbus during his first voyage. On the 28th of October, 1492, the Pearl of the Antilles was first sighted by the great navigator, who bestowed upon it the name of Juana, in honour of Prince John, the son of Ferdinand and Isabella. Upon the death of Ferdinand the island received the name of Fernandina ; and again that of Santiago, in reverence for

the patron saint of Spain; whilst later still the inhabitants rechristened it Ave Maria, in honour of the Virgin; but happily the old Indian appellation has outlasted all its other designations, and it is now universally known as Cuba.

At the time of its discovery the island was divided into nine principalities, under the sway of as many caciques, or chiefs. These were all independent of each other; yet so tractable was the disposition of the Indians that perfect tranquillity always existed, the will of their ruler being received as law by his subjects. Old chroniclers describe this people as being possessed of a dreamy, sensuous religion, which extended to a belief in the immortality of the soul, and to the existence of a beneficent Deity. A juggling priesthood—much resembling the present Shamans amongst the Siberian tribes—worked on the fears of their flock, by pretended influence over malignant spirits; but none of the sanguinary rites of the Mexican empire were resorted to; and, according to the earliest Spanish authorities, the Cubans distinguished themselves beyond any other Indian nation, by their readiness to receive the doctrines of Christianity.

Baracoa was the first town founded, and from it parties pushed out and explored the island thoroughly. Its vast capabilities being thus

ascertained, the towns of Santiago and Trinidad were founded in 1514, on the south coast, for the purpose of facilitating intercourse with the Spanish inhabitants of Jamaica; other towns or villages in the interior also sprung up, and Baracoa became of some importance. As yet no settlement existed on the north coast, but San Juan de los Remedios was soon established; and on the 20th July, 1515, at the spot now called Batabano, on the south side of the island, was planted a town, named after Columbus, San Cristobel de la Habana, but four years later this designation was transferred to the place where the capital now stands.

At this time Baracoa, having been raised to the dignity of a city and a bishopric, was considered the capital, and remained so until 1522, when the honour of being the chief town of Cuba was bestowed upon Santiago. In 1538 an audacious French pirate reduced Havana to ashes—a proceeding which caused the erection of the *Castillo de la Fuerza*, a fortress which exists to this hour for the protection of the city. The shelter afforded by the fine harbour to the rich galleons passing between the Peninsula and New Spain, and the facility with which they could provision, water, and refit, under the shelter of the fort, caused the place imperceptibly to outstrip its neighbours; so that, in

1549, we find a new governor, Gonzalez Perez de Angulo, making it his abode—an example followed by his successors; so that Havannah silently, and without legal sanction, became considered the capital, a title with which it was not formally invested until 1589.

The history of Cuba throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and the first half of the eighteenth century, contains little worthy of remark, being a chronicle of piratical raids, more or less successful, and of acts of misgovernment and injustice perpetrated by successive rulers. Yet one fact must be remembered in the earlier annals of the island:—From its shores the adventurers started who discovered Yucatan and Darien; in Cuba we first find the name of Hernando Cortez brought prominently forward as the fierce taskmaster of the wretched Indians in the copper-mines of Cobre, and as the ardent squirer of fair dames; and from Havannah sailed Hernando de Soto, the explorer of Florida and the discoverer of the Mississippi. The rearing of cattle seems to have formed the occupation of the early settlers; in 1580 the cultivation of the sugar-cane and of tobacco was commenced, and negroes imported to assist therein; and before the seventeenth century it had been found necessary to strengthen Havannah by two

additional fortresses, the Morro and the Punta, both of which are still in existence. Filibustering descents and local mismanagement hardly merit very close attention.

But in the latter half of the eighteenth century an event of the first importance befell Cuba; this was the capture of Havannah by the British.

Although apprised of the forthcoming invasion, Don Juan de Prado Porto Carrero, the captain-general, made few preparations to meet it, beyond ascertaining what number of men were available for the defence of the island, and the proportion of slaves to whom arms might be safely intrusted. He openly averred that the project would never be carried out; but his incredulity received an abrupt termination on the 6th June, 1762, when over two hundred of the enemy's vessels appeared off Havannah.

On the 5th March the expedition had sailed from Spithead, having for its object first the seizure of the French possessions in the West Indies, and next the capture of Havannah, which was considered the key to the Spanish colonies in both North and South America. After touching at Martinique, where the British squadron, under Sir James Douglas, joined it, the expedition steered straight for Havannah, by the old Bahama channel,

a dangerous course, but one that had the double effect of taking the enemy unprepared, and of preventing the French from sending succour from St. Domingo. Two frigates were sent in advance, and on the 2nd June discovered five Spanish ships, which they immediately engaged, capturing four, although one made her escape. On the morning of the 5th the Pan of Matanzas was sighted, and on the following day—Havannah being thirty miles to the westward—preparations were made for the landing of the troops, a duty entrusted to Commodore Keppel. The admiral, Sir George Pocock, with his fleet, stood on for the mouth of the harbour to reconnoitre, and also to cover the operations of the commodore. He discovered twelve Spanish line-of-battle ships, with many merchant vessels, lying in the harbour.

The crew of the vessel that had escaped from the frigates on the 2nd had aroused the captain-general from his incredulity. This officer at once assembled a council of war, at which it was resolved to resist to the last, and the plan of defence was arranged. Two ships were sunk at the mouth of the harbour—a hasty measure that the Spaniards had soon reason to regret, for although it effectually excluded the British, it equally shut in their own fine fleet, and rendered their vessels perfectly

useless. On the opposition offered by the forts the safety of the city mainly depended; and the command of the most important of these, the Morro and Punta, was entrusted to naval officers, an arrangement that gave deadly offence to the officers of the army, who regarded themselves as defrauded of the post of honour and of danger; but the Captain-General argued that the sailors were more accustomed to artillery than infantry and cavalry officers, and the brave defence made by them showed the wisdom of his choice. When the entire Spanish force was assembled it nearly doubled in strength that of the invaders, consisting of 4600 soldiers of all arms, 9000 seamen and marines of the squadron, 14,000 militia and people of colour—making a total of 27,600.

On the morning of the 7th Lord Albemarle effected the landing of the whole of the troops, between the river Cogimar and Bacuranao, about six miles from the Morro, without opposition, and at the same time the admiral landed a body of seamen and marines four miles to the westward of Havannah. The enemy manifesting a disposition to dispute the passage of the Rio Cogimar, the "Dragon" bombarded the fort, which soon surrendered, and the invaders crossed without further difficulty. The greater part of the Spanish force

was stationed in the town of Guanabacao, opposite Havannah, between the two spots where the British had landed, with the intention of preventing the latter from turning the head of the harbour, and attacking the city by land.

Lord Albemarle halted that night in the village of Cogimar, and on the following morning gained possession of the heights overlooking the city, upon which batteries were erected, and fire opened on the Morro. The naval captain in charge of this important post, Don Luis de Velasco, behaved with the greatest gallantry; his second in command, the Marquis de Gonzales, died sword in hand, and the resistance made by the garrison elicited a just tribute of commendation from Sir George Pocock; but the opposing force was too strong, and on the 30th July the Morro surrendered, when a fortnight later (14th August) the city capitulated. The spoils seized by the captors were very large, and their distribution gave rise to much discontent. How uneven such division was may be gathered from the fact that while Sir George Pocock and Lord Albemarle had each 122,697*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* as their share, that of an ordinary seaman was only 3*l.* 14*s.* 9¾*d.*, and of a private 4*l.* 1*s.* 8½*d.*!

The English remained in occupation of Cuba

for only a few months, yet in that brief time they gave a start to the prosperity of the island by pushing its trade and traffic, by importing negroes to cultivate the waste land, and by displaying an energy that the Spaniards, after their departure, endeavoured to continue. By the Treaty of Paris, in 1763, Havannah was restored to Spain. On the 7th July of that year the keys of the city were formally delivered up to the new captain-general, the Conde de Ricla, and the English garrison embarked on its return to Europe, but the present prosperity of the island may be said to date from that event.

During the remainder of the eighteenth century Cuba made rapid advances. A large emigration from Florida increased the population, whilst in 1795 a number of French planters came from San Domingo, bringing with them improved modes of coffee-culture, which led to an extensive increase in the number of plantations. Since then steam machinery has been introduced, and but for the system of slavery, and the utter disregard for the Creoles manifested by the Peninsula government, the island would have been one vast garden. To grind down, oppress, and insult the native Cubans, seems to have been the wish that lay nearest to the heart of the home government. No Cuban

was ever appointed to a post in his native country, these offices being exclusively reserved for Spaniards; his political, civil, and religious liberties were taken away, and he had to contribute enormously in taxes towards the maintenance of a large standing army and navy. Hence numerous insurrections occur in the history of the island throughout the present century. In 1823 a society was formed for the purpose of obtaining some measure of freedom, the pretext employed being that Cuba was about to be sold to England. In 1829 another attempt was made, chiefly through the instrumentality of Mexican settlers. An insurrection of the blacks took place in 1844, and was remarkable for its excellent organization, although it aimed at the murder of every white person on the island. In 1848 Lopez made a filibustering descent from the United States, and another in 1851, which cost him his life. The following extract from an excellent book[2] on Cuba will show the course adopted by the Spanish government towards the native population:—"So far from affording personal security to the Cuban, the government has taken every method to endanger it, under the pretence that it is necessary to keep

[2] "Cuba and the Cubans," by Author of "Letters from Cuba." *New York*, 1850.

the native inhabitants in a state of constant apprehension, in order to ensure their continued allegiance. To this end every kind of judicial enormity prevails, and every description of imposition is practised upon the helpless creole. If he commits a wrong, he is punished without an opportunity of being heard in his own defence; or, what is the same thing, he is tried before a prejudiced tribunal. If he has suffered an injury, he finds the means of redress so tedious that endurance is preferable to the formidable task of obtaining justice. There is but one means of avoiding persecution, but one way of escape when persecuted, but one method to obtain justice when seeking ordinary redress—it is by bribery. Gold will open prison doors; procure dispensation for falsely imputed crimes; obtain a tardy degree of long-sought justice. Thus personal security is only to be enjoyed at the expense of the right of property."

Is it any wonder, after perusing the above—and other authorities confirm the statements—that, when in 1868 the Spanish revolution broke out, the patriots of Cuba should have endeavoured to free their lovely island from the yoke of such masters? How much blood and treasure the suppression of this movement has cost Spain we know not; but this we do know, that the torch of liberty once

kindled in a country possessed of such impenetrable fastnesses as Cuba, and inhabited by a warm-blooded and generous people, will never be extinguished in truth by the legions the mother country can bring across the seas to quench it. "Cuban rising at an end," we read frequently, and perhaps with little attention, for the subject claims the interest of few amongst us; but it is far from being at the wished-for end, and that consummation will never be attained until some measure of liberty is abroad in the land. A writer[3] who was with them during the outbreak says: "It has been my lot in life to mix a good deal with discontented people—rebels, revolutionists, reformers, and, in fact, all categories of men who look on themselves as oppressed. Poles, whose families were shivering in Siberian wastes; Frenchmen, whose kith and kin had been sent to a better world by the blood-stained mountebank who dissipated Lamartine's poetic republic with artillery volleys; and many others of the same genus; but until I listened to Cubans giving vent to their hatred of Spain, I never had any conception with what diabolical hatred one nation can look upon another. There is no use attempting to paint the feelings of the Cubans still under the power of Spain for the race from which they have

[3] "The Mambi-Land," by James J. O'Kelly.

sprung, because all painting would be a weak and ineffectual representation of the reality. In all probability, if the present disturbed state of affairs continues in Spain, the pent-up rage of this much-oppressed people will find vent in a new Sicilian vespers; and, if it were not for the fear of exposing their families to a renewal of the insults and outrages to which they were subjected after the first reverses in the revolution, the attempt would have long since been made."

The consciousness that the bayonets of the 145,000 soldiers she has sent out to crush the rising are little likely to instil more loving sentiments into the breasts of the Creoles seems at last to be striking Spain. Cuban affairs now occupy the attention of the Spanish legislature, and a bill for the manumission of the slaves in a few years has become law. Let us trust that ere then this virulent hatred will be of the past, and that justice will be rendered to both negroes and creoles; if not, the happiest chapter in the future history of Cuba will date from the hour when the stars and stripes replaced on the Morro the blood-stained golden and red banner of Old Spain.

The Island of Puerto Rico.

Puerto (Porto) Rico, the second Spanish pos-

session in the West Indies, is an island lying between 17° 55′ and 18° 30′ N. lat., and 65° 39′ and 67° 11′ W. long.; with an area of 3550 square miles it supports a population of 646,362 souls.

In shape Puerto Rico is a rude parallelogram, 100 miles long by forty broad. A mountain range, whose highest point attains an elevation of 3700 feet, forms a back-bone to the island, which towards the southern face descends abruptly to the sea, but on the other side the slope is much more gradual, a plain several miles in width existing between the base of the range and the coast. From this central chain many spurs run out north and south, enclosing between them valleys of great fertility, those on the north side affording the richest pasturage; while the southern part is deemed best adapted for the growth of sugar. There are no less than seventeen rivers running into the sea on the north side of the island, and harbours abound, but the heavy surf that rolls in with northerly winds makes an anchorage insecure whilst they prevail, and the same cause has thrown up bars at the mouths of the rivers, which blocking their entrances, make them difficult of access without a pilot. On the north-west coast the rivers form extensive lagoons of several miles in length, the accumulation of sand preventing their waters

from finding a free passage to the sea. The harbour of San Juan (the capital) is completely sheltered by the island on which the town stands; Aguadilla, at the north-west extremity of the island, is an open roadstead, but much frequented from the facilities it offers for watering and provisioning; while Guanica and Hovas, on the south coast, are of good size, afford a safe anchorage, and are easily defended. Altogether nature has been most bountiful to Puerto Rico in the matter of water and havens.

The soil of this island much resembles that of Jamaica, and needs no especial description. It is of extraordinary fertility, adapted both to the growth of the sugar-cane and the coffee-plant; whilst the swampy tract created by the obstruction of the rivers is made use of for the cultivation of rice and cocoa-nuts. A large quantity of sugar is produced annually; besides coffee, tobacco, maize, rice, and cotton. The good pasturage makes the breeding of cattle a very profitable business, and both live-stock and hides form articles of export. The commerce of the island is very considerable, as will be seen by the statistics; but Cuba and Puerto Rico being regarded as one, it is not possible to apportion the exact share due to each.

It contains some sixty towns and villages. The capital, San Juan de Puerto Rico, is situated on a narrow island, lying to the north of the mainland, with which it is connected by a bridge. The town is laid out at right angles, and possesses a cathedral, theatre, and the usual government buildings. It is strongly fortified, and can boast of having thrice repulsed the assaults of the British. It is connected by telegraphic cable with the other West India Islands, and a land telegraph runs between the most important towns; several railways have been projected, but none as yet constructed; indeed, irrigation, drainage, and much other good work, is at a standstill, owing to the application of every penny of surplus revenue to the suppression of the Cuban rebellion.

Puerto Rico is governed under a constitution voted by the Spanish Cortes in 1869. The governor is president of the superior tribunals of justice, but the fiscal administration has a special chief, called an Intendant. Justice is administered, as in Cuba, by judges and alcaldes; while ecclesiastical affairs are presided over by a bishop, chosen by the Crown and approved by the Pope. For administrative purposes the island and its dependencies are divided into nine districts—Puerto Rico, Bayamon, Arecibo, Aguadilla, Mayaquez, Ponce, Humacao,

Guayama, and Viéques. Slavery was abolished in Puerto Rico by a bill passed on the 23rd of March, 1873.

Puerto Rico was discovered by Columbus in 1493, and invaded in 1509 by the Spaniards under Ponce de Leon, by whom the whole of the inhabitants, 600,000 or 800,000 in number, were exterminated in a few years. Its history presents nothing in any way remarkable, and the prejudices arising from caste and colour are unknown in this island. With ordinary good management it would be one of the richest spots on the globe. Misgovernment prevents the full development of its resources.

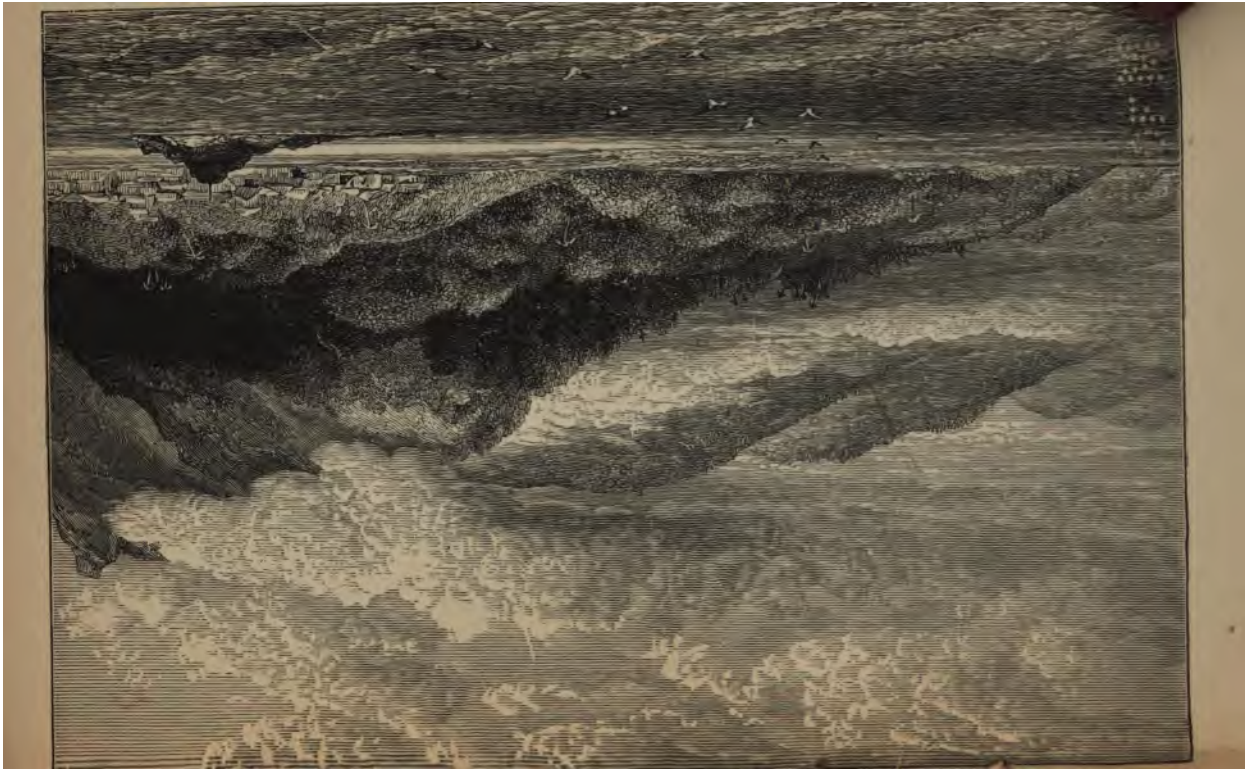
CHAPTER XII.

THE ISLAND OF HAITI, FORMERLY HISPANIOLA.

WE now arrive at the Island of Haiti, on which exist two independent governments ruled by separate Presidents, having distinct laws, and differing in many other respects—these are the Republics of Haiti and of San Domingo.

But although these governments are politically distinct, their history is so interwoven that, in a small compass, it would be difficult to separate them without recapitulating the same incidents when treating of each. I shall, therefore, first describe the island as a whole; I shall next give the necessary particulars concerning each Republic; and, lastly, I shall carry the history of the entire island down to the present time, a method by which I hope to bring the leading events clearly before the reader.

The Island of Haiti (Hispaniola), for some time known also as San Domingo, lies between lat.



17° 36′ and 19° 56′ N., and long. 68° 20′ and 74° 38′ W. Next to Cuba it is the largest of the Antilles, its length between Capes Engaño and Tiburon being 405 miles, and its greatest width from north to south, between Capes Isabella and Beata, being 165 miles; whilst its total area, inclusive of the islands off the coast, is 28,030 square miles, supporting a population estimated at 822,000, of whom at least three-fourths are negroes or mulattoes. Reference to the map will show that it is situated between the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, being separated from the former by the Windward Passage, forty-eight miles in breadth; and from the latter by the Mona Passage, seventy-six miles in breadth.

The numerous bays and inlets with which Haiti is indented make its form very irregular, more particularly its western end. From the south-west corner a narrow peninsula protrudes, of 150 miles in length by twenty to forty in breadth; and another shorter arm runs out on the north-west, as well as a considerable prolongation, forming the Bay of Samana, on the north-east, circumstances which give to the island a coast-line of 1500 miles and many excellent harbours.

It is traversed from east to west by three ranges of mountains, connected by lateral branches, be-

tween which are situated extensive plains. The central chain, the Sierra del Cibao, attains its culminating point at an elevation of about 8000 feet; to the northward, and nearly parallel with it, runs a chain known as the Sierra de Monte Cristo, and between them lies the Vega Real, a noble plain 130 miles long, watered by the Yuna and Gran Yaque rivers, and comprising excellent pasture-land. The third range, starting from Cape Tiburon, extends throughout the south-western peninsula, and terminates about half way between the cities of Port-au-Prince and San Domingo. From these diverge smaller spurs, running towards the sea, which divide the whole country into plains of varied sizes, some of which are of great extent, and afford first-class grazing-ground for stock.

The principal streams have an east, west, or southerly course, and although amply supplying the districts they pass through, are obstructed by sand-bars, and unnavigable for any distance. Lakes are numerous, and in some instances salt; mineral springs, saline, sulphur, and chalybeate, are found; and amongst the minerals known to exist on the island are gold, silver, platinum, mercury, copper, iron, tin, sulphur, and manganese, besides several kinds of precious stones. Formerly gold-mining was carried on, but want of capital has of

late years caused this pursuit to be abandoned, and now only the poorer classes busy themselves in gold-washing on the banks of some of the northern streams.

The vegetation is of a tropical character, and very luxuriant. The mountains are clothed with forests of pine, mahogany, ebony, and lignum vitæ, and magnificent palms flourish on the plains. Flowering plants abound, and the rich soil yields every species of esculent common to the tropics. The western portion of the island is most prolific, and supports the largest population. The articles of export are sugar, coffee, cocoa, tobacco, indigo, and cotton, but the products have decidedly fallen off since the erection of the Republics. In 1789 there was exported 76,000,000 lbs. of coffee; in 1856 the amount had decreased to 35,497,824 lbs.; but the later returns present a better array of figures.

The geology of the island shows that limestone is the prevailing formation, schistose and quartz rocks occurring in some parts. On the south side of the Bay of Samana are found a large number of very curious insulated limestone hillocks, conical in form, and averaging from eighty to 150 feet in height. By the action of the sea many of these have been undermined, forming caverns whose floors are of pure white sand, whilst magnificent

stalactites reflect every colour of the rainbow. These beautiful natural temples seem formerly to have been frequented by the aborigines, who made them the theatre of such rites as their simple religion enjoined.

The climate of Haiti resembles in most particulars that of the neighbouring islands, but is perhaps more moist than Cuba, although this fact does not detract from its salubrity. In the elevated districts towards the north a perpetual spring reigns, and the summer heats are always tempered by the sea-breeze and by the land-breeze, or *terral*, during the night. Only the southern coast is liable to hurricanes, but the whole island has on several occasions suffered severely from earthquakes. The most notable of these disasters occurred in 1564, 1684, 1691, 1751, 1770, and 1842. By that of 1771, the city of Port-au-Prince was destroyed, and the coast submerged for a distance of sixty miles; the visitation of 1842 laid several towns in ruins, and the loss of life is estimated by thousands.

The above will give a general idea of the physical features and capabilities of the island, and I now proceed to the two republics which jointly occupy it.

Haiti (*République de Haïti*) is a Republic occupying the western portion of the island of the same

name. It is divided from the Dominican Republic on the east by an irregular line drawn from the mouth of the river Anses-à-Pitre, on the south coast, to that of the river Massacre on the north coast, but the boundary-line is very loose, and much land is still debateable. Including the islands of Tortuga and Gonaive, it contains 10,204 square miles, an area divided into six departments, which are again subdivided into arrondissements and communes. The population is estimated—no census exists—by the best authorities at 572,000, although the official return makes the number 800,000.

The capital and chief port—Port-au-Prince—is situated at the head of the great bay on the west coast, and has a population of 22,000. Built upon a rather abrupt slope, the view of the city from the sea is very attractive; the streets are wide, and the principal thoroughfares laid down at right angles to the beach, so that from the bay a spectator can obtain, through these, a view into the country beyond. It is reported to have been possessed of handsome buildings, churches, &c., in days of yore, but earthquakes and revolutions combined have destroyed every vestige of its former reputed greatness, except an immense stone basin in the upper part of the town, especially designed for the horses

of the inhabitants to bathe in—a stage of luxury to which London has not yet attained. The warehouses of the foreign merchants are the only buildings of any note, the remainder consisting of wooden houses huddled together in irregular fashion; and the drainage is left entirely to nature. Several small islands are scattered about in front of the capital, and in the distance the hills of Gonaive are visible. At this latter island there is a considerable town, from whence most of the Haitian coffee and other produce is shipped; and it also possesses an historic interest as being the place where Tousaint L'Ouverture embarked to meet a miserable death in the dungeons of Joux. The other ports open to foreign commerce are Cape Haytien, Port de la Paix, Saint-Marc, Miragoane, Jérémie, Aux Cayes, Acquin, and Jacmel.

At the western end of Haiti the mountains, though numerous, are of less elevation than in the eastern portion, and the tracts between them consist of beautiful valleys and plains, abundantly watered, and possessing a natural growth of valuable timber, rare woods, and dyes.

Agriculture is conducted in a very primitive fashion, but with a smaller yield than in the old days of slavery. The articles most largely exported are coffee, cotton, cocoa, wax, logwood,

fustic, mahogany and tortoiseshell. Cotton has always formed a prominent staple, and at one time, before emancipation, 7,200,000 lbs. were sent annually to France alone. After this, it greatly declined, but on the outbreak of the American civil war, when cotton rose in value from 4*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per pound, its cultivation was resumed with great success, and in 1866 the crop reached 7,000,000 lbs. The effort was spasmodic; for in 1872 we find raw cotton exported to the value of 76,786*l.*; in 1873 it had sunk to 25,493*l.*; in 1874, to 17,224*l.*; and in 1877, to 2164*l.*! The coffee yield has proved more constant, and being of excellent quality and very cheap, it obtains a ready market in Europe, more particularly in France, where the San Domingo coffee, as it is called, is almost exclusively used for the army. The commercial intercourse of the Republic is chiefly with Great Britain and the United States. The total annual imports for the three years, 1875 to 1877, averaged 1,180,000*l.*, and the exports 1,300,000*l.*

Haiti is governed by a Constitution, proclaimed on the 14th June, 1867, in accordance with which the legislative power is vested in a National Assembly, divided into two Chambers, called respectively the Senate and the House of Commons.

The latter is elected by the direct vote of all male citizens for the term of three years, while the members of the Senate are nominated for two years by the House of Commons, from a list presented by the electoral colleges. The executive power is in the hands of a President, who, according to the Constitution, should be elected by the people, but of late years this power has been usurped by the National Assembly or by the troops. The presidential chair is rarely occupied by one individual for the full term of office—four years.[1]

The finances of the Republic have been thrown into such disorder by civil war and insurrections, that the public revenue and expenditure can only be roughly estimated; and by this unsatisfactory method the total revenue in recent years is calculated at 900,000*l.*, and the expenditure at 1,400,000*l.*—figures which would not inspire a capitalist with much confidence. Haiti is also the owner of a large floating debt, consisting chiefly of paper money issued by successive Governments, the greater mass enormously depreciated by frequent repudiation, and by forgery on a vast scale. There is also a foreign debt, contracted at Paris in 1825, on which no interest has been paid for

[1] Statesman's Year Book for 1879.

years; nevertheless, in June, 1875, the government issued, with partial success, a new foreign loan of three millions and a quarter, through a large house in Paris, the avowed object of which was to extinguish the old debt and to construct railways.

The army of the Republic consists of 6828 men. There is also a special "Guard of the Government," numbering 650 men, commanded by ten generals! These officers also act as aides-de-camp to the President. The rank and file of the Haitian army has little existence except on paper.

The laws of the Republic are founded on the civil code of France, and the Roman Catholic religion is recognized, under the jurisdiction of an archbishop.

The Republic of San Domingo (*Republica Dominica*) occupies the whole of the island of Haiti lying eastward of the Haitian Republic. Its greatest length, from Cape Engaño to the frontier, is about 260 miles, its greatest breadth 165 miles; giving an area of 18,045 square miles, supporting a population estimated at 250,000.

The Republic is divided into five provinces, or states, viz.:—Santo Domingo, Azua de Compostela, Concepcion de la Vega, Santiago de los Caballeros, and Santa Cruz del Seybo, the capitals

of which have the same names respectively. The principal harbours are San Domingo, Puerto Plata, and the Bay of Samana.

What I have already said concerning the soil, climate, and productions of Haiti, will apply equally to San Domingo. In the latter the mountains are on a grander scale, and gold, silver, iron, and copper, are said to abound. The old Spanish historians bear testimony to the quantity of gold that this portion of Haiti yielded. In 1502, as many as 240,000 crowns of gold were coined in the mint at Concepcion de la Vega, and the city of Santiago de los Caballeros was chiefly inhabited by goldsmiths. Silver also was extracted in large quantities, but in the sixteenth century the mines were closed by a royal decree, and their exact position has now become matter of doubt.

Haiti in everything betrays her French origin, and in like manner San Domingo is still closely bound to Spain in language, manners, and customs. The latter Republic is governed under a constitution adopted in 1844, and reproclaimed, with alterations, on 14th November, 1865, after the expulsion of the Spanish troops, who had held the country for the two previous years. By its terms, the legislative power is vested in a National Con-

gress of two houses, called the Consego Conservador and the Tribundo, the first consisting of twelve, and the second of fifteen members; but the powers of the National Congress only extend to the general affairs of the Republic, the five individual states having separate legislatures—a cumbrous arrangement that sufficiently reveals their Spanish origin. The executive is vested in a president, holding office for four years; but few of them reach their full term.

The revenue is mainly derived from customs duties, the prohibitory character of which obstructs the increase of commercial relations. The maintenance of a standing army cripples the exchequer; and, besides an internal debt of unknown dimensions, San Domingo has a foreign debt, contracted at London in 1869, nominally for three-quarters of a million, but only 50,000*l.* has reached the hands of the Dominican government. The principal articles of export are tobacco, coffee, and sugar; the commerce of the Republic lies almost entirely between Great Britain and the United States.

The population is composed mainly of negroes and mulattoes, only one-tenth of the whole being Spaniards of pure descent. The Dominicans are described as courteous, affable, and hospitable, the differences of race being quite unconsidered in

social intercourse. The prevailing religion is Roman Catholic, and the Archbishop of San Domingo still retains the title of Primate of the Indies, conferred upon him in the Spanish colonial days.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HISTORY OF HAITI.

I NOW pass on to the general history of the island of Haiti. It was discovered by Columbus in 1492, and at Isabella, on its northern shore, was established the first Spanish colony in the New World. Four years later (1496), San Domingo was founded. The mineral wealth and great capabilities of the island caused the Peninsula government to bestow much attention on their new possession; but as the wretched natives perished beneath their yoke, and the continent of America became known, the Spaniards gradually withdrew to richer fields, leaving Haiti almost depopulated, except in the neighbourhood of the large towns. In 1585 Francis Drake seized the city of San Domingo, and only left on payment of a heavy ransom; and shortly afterwards the buccaneers commenced operations on the mainland, and from the island of Tortugas. How it fared with these wild huntsmen

we have already seen. About 1632 the French

Sketch by Columbus.

took possession of the western shore, and increased

so rapidly that the Spaniards found it impossible to drive them out; and the footing they had gained was recognized by the Treaty of Ryswick, in 1697, when the western portion of Haiti was confirmed to France. The latter nation was fully conscious of the importance of the new acquirement, and

Old French Sugar Mill.

under French rule it became of great value, supplying almost all Europe with cotton and sugar.

But the larger eastern portion of the island, which still belonged to Spain, had no share in this progress, remaining much in the same condition as formerly; and thus matters stood—a sluggish

community side by side with a thriving one—when the French Revolution broke out, and plunged the island into a state of ferment. In 1790 the population of the western colony consisted of half a million, of which number 38,360 were of European origin, 28,370 free people of colour, and the whole of the remainder negro slaves. The government of the island excluded the free people of colour—mostly mulattoes—from all political privileges, although they were in many cases well-educated men, and themselves the owners of large estates. This gave rise to much heartburning, and caused many of the rich mulattoes to remove to Paris, where they could enjoy a degree of freedom unknown in their native island. The rage for liberty was then paramount in France, and the history these men gave of the barbarous way in which the slaves were treated by their masters gave birth to a bitter prejudice against the West Indian planters, which assumed a tangible shape in the formation of a society called, "*Les Amis des Noirs.*" The white colonists of Haiti fully participated in all the abstract principles of liberty, fraternity, and equality; but such principles were only applicable to whites; the people of colour must have no inheritance therein; and so matters went on from bad to worse, until, in 1790, an insurrection took

place under the leadership of James Ogé, a mulatto, who had been educated in France. The attempt was put down with the customary rigour on such occasions, and Ogé and his brother were broken on the wheel; but the spark had been applied to the tinder, and the explosion was postponed—not averted.

On the 15th May, 1790, the French National Assembly passed a decree declaring that people of colour, born of free parents, were entitled to all the privileges of French citizens. When this news reached the colony, it set the inhabitants in a perfect frenzy, the mulattoes manifesting an unbounded joy, whilst the whites boiled at the indignity their class had sustained. The representations of the latter caused the governor to delay the operation of the decree until the home government could be communicated with—a measure that aroused the greatest indignation amongst the mulattoes, and civil war appeared inevitable, when a third and wholly unexpected party stepped into the arena. The slaves rose in insurrection on August 23rd, 1791, marching with the body of a white infant on a spear-head as a standard, and murdering all Europeans indiscriminately. In the utmost consternation the whites conceded the required terms to the mulattoes, and, together

with the help of the military, the rising was suppressed, and there seemed a prospect of peace, when the Assembly at Paris repealed the decree of 15th May.

The mulattoes now flew to arms, and for several years a terrible struggle was sustained, the horrors of which were augmented by vindictive ferocity on both sides. Commissioners sent from France could effect no settlement, for the camp of the whites was divided into two hostile sections, royalist and republican. The English and Spaniards both descended on the island, and the blacks, under able chiefs, held impregnable positions in the mountains. Apprehensive of a British invasion in force, the Commissioners, finding they could not conquer the blacks, resolved on conciliating them; and in August, 1793, universal freedom was proclaimed—a measure ratified by the National Convention early in the following year. Meanwhile the English had taken Port-au-Prince, and were besieging the French governor in Port de la Paix, when the blacks, relying on the recent proclamation, came to his assistance, under the command of Toussaint L'Ouverture, and effected his release. After a long struggle the English were withdrawn from Haiti, and the island, which had passed entirely to France by the Treaty of Basle, fell

under the authority of Toussaint L'Ouverture, who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief by the French government.

The history of Haiti for the next few years is

Toussaint L'Ouverture.

inseparably connected with that of this extraordinary man. François Dominique Toussaint, a negro of pure blood, a slave and the offspring of slaves, was born in 1743, and on attaining man-

hood was first employed as a coachman, and afterwards held a post of trust in connexion with the sugar manufactory of the estate to which he belonged. The overseer having taken a fancy to him, he was taught to read and write, and even picked up some slight knowledge of Latin and mathematics, but he remained apparently contented with his lot, and gave no token of the eminence he was afterwards to attain, until 1791, when the mulattoes appealed to the negroes for assistance in enforcing their rights. Even then Toussaint drew upon himself the enmity of his brother slaves by refusing to move ; but at length, after having secured the escape of his master and family, he joined the negro army in a medical capacity, but his military talent becoming manifest, he soon received the rank of brigadier-general. At first the blacks fought with the Spaniards against the French, and in a series of operations Toussaint so distinguished himself that he received a decoration, and became known as the most skilful leader amongst the negro host.

When the French governor, Levaux, was besieged by the British at Port de la Paix, and daily expected that he must capitulate, the idea of sending for succour to Toussaint struck him, and he despatched a faithful messenger to the negro gene-

ral, begging his assistance, and promising him the rank of a general of brigade in the French service. Considering that the future of his race looked more hopeful under a republic than a monarchy such as Spain, more particularly since the former had proclaimed universal freedom, Toussaint resolved to declare his fealty to France, and having communicated his ideas to his followers, who were sensible of their wisdom, the negro army marched to Levaux's relief. On hearing that Toussaint had won over his companions, the French governor exclaimed "*Mais cet homme fait ouverture partout,*" and from that day the black commander-in-chief received the surname of L'Ouverture, by which he is best known in history.

Acting with wonderful energy, Toussaint effected a junction with Levaux, drove the English from their positions, took twenty-eight Spanish batteries in four days, and finally the British abandoned the island, whilst the Spaniards gave up all claim to its western end.

Toussaint L'Ouverture—now holding the position of commander-in-chief, but virtually dictator—succeeded with great skill in combining all the hostile elements of the colony. Peace was restored, commerce and agriculture revived, the whites were encouraged to reclaim their estates, and by a

variety of prudent and temperate measures Toussaint showed the remarkable administrative abilities that he possessed. At this stage he assumed great state in public, being always guarded by a chosen body of 1500 men in brilliant uniform, but in private life he was frugal and moderate. In the administration of affairs he was assisted by a council of nine, of whom eight were white planters. This body drew up a Constitution by which L'Ouverture was named president for life, and free trade established. The draft of this constitution, together with an autograph letter, he forwarded to Bonaparte; but the First Consul had no toleration for fellow-upstarts, and replied, "He is a revolted slave whom we must punish; the honour of France is outraged." At this time the whole island of Haiti was under Toussaint's sway.

As some excuse for Bonaparte it must be acknowledged that Toussaint undoubtedly contemplated independence, although he did not yet avow it. For the first time in the history of Hispaniola the authority of Spain was unrecognized, and one of unmixed African descent, a slave himself, ruled from Capes Engaño to Tiburon, and inhabited the palace at San Domingo. Anxious to divest his new presidency of even nominal subjection to

France, he declared the independence of the island, with himself as supreme chief, in July 1801.

Most unfortunately for the Haitian general, hostilities had for the moment ceased between Great Britain and France, and the First Consul was enabled to bestow his close attention on the former French colony. Determined to repossess it, Bonaparte sent out an army of 30,000 men, with sixty-six ships of war, under the command of his brother-in-law General Leclerc. Without resorting to the formality of a declaration of war, the French endeavoured to enter Cape François, a town under the command of a negro named Cristophe, afterwards famous—or infamous—in the annals of Haiti. Toussaint was absent in the interior; but his lieutenant, finding Cape François untenable, burnt it to the ground and withdrew with his troops. Everywhere the French encountered the strongest opposition; and finding he could not overcome the blacks by force, Leclerc endeavoured to do so by diplomacy. Two of L'Ouverture's sons had been sent to France for their education, and these youths were sent out with the expedition, in hopes that by working on the father's sympathies he might be induced to surrender the island without a struggle. Under the [illegible] of their tutor, the lads were sent to visit

a letter from Bonaparte promising Toussaint great honours if he would declare his allegiance; but the negro general, though terribly moved, remained unshaken in resolution. "Take back my children, since it must be so. I will be faithful to my brethren and my God," he replied simply, and his sons returned to the enemy's camp.

During Toussaint's presidency he had abolished slavery, the negroes still working the plantations, but as free men, and under the name of "cultivators." It was fixed by law that in return for this labour they should receive one-third of the crop, but at the same time heavy penalties existed against idleness. Leclerc now endeavoured by proclamations to turn the cultivators against their chief, and also laboured to sow dissension in the ranks of the black army, by making the officers tempting offers, which they too often believed in and accepted. For months a bloody war raged, in which great cruelties were inflicted; but the discipline of the French was slowly telling in their favour, when Leclerc made a political blunder that destroyed the advantages he had gained. Thinking that all obstacles were overcome, he threw off the mask, and boldly declared the real object of the expedition—the re-enslavement of the negro population.

This news fell like a thunderbolt amongst the blacks, who rallied round Toussaint in thousands. Responding to his call, and dreading the loss of precious freedom, the cultivators flocked to their champion's standard, and in every direction the French were driven back, until they were hemmed in at Cape François. Here they concentrated their forces, but a fearful pestilence broke out amongst the Europeans, and the soldiers died off by hundreds. Utterly baffled, and fearing the extermination of his army through disease, Leclerc again had resort to diplomacy, and issued another proclamation, stating that his ignorance of the real condition of the island had led him hastily to adopt a measure which he now acknowledged to be an error, and that to provide for the future welfare and liberty of the inhabitants an assembly should be called of representatives from different parts of the island, without regard to colour. This specious programme won over Cristophe, Dessalines, and other negro generals; and finally, on receiving solemn assurances from Leclerc, Toussaint accepted his offers, and peace was concluded.

L'Ouverture determined to withdraw into private life, and retired to his estate; but the French general had determined on his destruction, and did not hesitate to accomplish it by the blackest

treachery. On June 7th, 1802, Toussaint received a cordial letter from General Brunet, asking for an interview in relation to certain arrangements about the black troops, desiring him to bring his wife and family with him, and concluding with warm expressions of esteem and friendship. This Judas epistle was despatched by order of Leclerc. The noble and too confiding negro went to Gonaives as desired, and after a few minutes friendly conversation Brunet left the room, when, an armed force entering, seized Toussaint and his family, and took them at midnight on board a French frigate, which immediately weighed, and sailed for Brest. On arrival he was separated from his family, whom he never saw again, and being hurried to Paris under a strong guard, was first confined in the Temple, but afterwards transferred to the dungeons of the Château Joux, in the department of Doubs. He was known to have buried a large amount of treasure, concerning the whereabouts of which the First Consul caused him to be frequently questioned. Perhaps it was to elicit some information on this subject that the native of a tropical climate was pent up in the cold dungeons of a castle, and there allowed to pine away, without warm clothing and with insufficient food. As weakness told on his frame he petitioned for a trial, but the prayer

fell on deaf ears. Finally the governor of the prison went away for four days, leaving his captive without food or drink. On his return Toussaint was dead, and the rats had gnawed his feet. It was given out that apoplexy was the cause of death; a more painful instance of European treachery towards a negro can never be found.

This breach of faith on the part of the French aroused the fury and indignation of the blacks; and Leclerc having assumed the title of Governor-General, their eyes were opened to the true designs of that officer, and, under Dessalines, Cristophe, Clerveaux, and others, the fires of insurrection blazed out afresh throughout the whole island, and at the same time the yellow fever decimated the white ranks; amongst its victims was Leclerc.

General Rochambeau succeeded to the command, and a short armistice ensued, but soon the conflict broke out with renewed ferocity. How the war was carried on a few examples will show. Captain Bayntun, of H.M.S. "Cumberland," reports capturing a French schooner. "She came from Cape François, and bound to Port-au-Prince, having on board 100 bloodhounds from Cuba, intended to accompany the army serving against the blacks." Southey says, "His (Rochambeau's) exertions were now limited to hunting down straggling

negroes with bloodhounds, whose natural ferocity was increased by having these poor wretches thrown to them to be devoured alive." Nothing can exceed the barbarity displayed by the French on this occasion. They dug trenches twenty or thirty feet in depth, and causing the prisoners to kneel down, shot them so that their bodies fell into the common grave; and this was continued until the pit would hold no more. Finding this process troublesome, and wasteful of ammunition, they instituted "*Les Noyades*," which consisted in fastening the captives to a long chain, taking them out to sea, and drowning them in strings. Is it to be wondered when French civilization stooped to such butcher work that the retribution exacted by the negroes was terrible?

I once more quote Southey:[1]—"By the general voice of the blacks, Dessalines was appointed to act as Commander-in-Chief; he determined to prosecute the war with vigour, and marched with a great force into the plain of Cape François. The French sallied out to risk a battle; they attacked the negroes with the utmost resolution. Dessalines' troops gave way to the shock, and a considerable number of them were taken prisoners. The French attempted to pursue the advantage,

[1] Vol. iii. p. 255.

but were repulsed with great loss; and a party who were marching to strengthen one of the wings of their army, were surrounded, and carried in triumph to the blacks' camp. During the night Rochambeau, regardless of the fate which awaited his own countrymen, executed his prisoners with circumstances of peculiar barbarity. Some were mutilated, and suffered to die slowly; their shrieks reached the ears of Dessalines, who immediately caused gibbets to be erected. By daylight not only every officer that he had taken prisoner, but numerous privates, were seen swinging in the breeze, in full view of the French. A terrible slaughter ensued; some fugitives escaped to Cape François, but their camp was destroyed. From this time the French were unable to face their opponents in the field."

Shut up in one corner of the island, the embarrassments of Rochambeau were much increased by the appearance of an English squadron off the coast; and at last, after eating the very dogs in the streets, he surrendered, and the power of the French was lost on the island.

On the 1st January, 1804, the Haitians formally declared their independence, and Dessalines was elected governor for life. Immediately this was done he caused the murder of every French

person on the island. This monster, in imitation of Bonaparte, assumed the title of Jean Jacques I., Emperor of Haiti, but he did not live long to enjoy his dignity. An uneducated, rude, illiterate negro, the possession of unbounded power brought forth all that was evil in his nature; and he resorted to a series of cruelties and butcheries that disgusted even the people over whom he ruled, and he was shot, from an ambush, by a party of his own soldiers, in 1806.

The island now fell under the rule of several chieftains. Pétion was supreme in the south-west; Cristophe in the north-west, and the Spaniards had repossessed themselves of its eastern end. Cristophe was appointed chief magistrate for life—a dignity he exchanged for that of King Henri I. Pétion, who appears to have been a mulatto of great talent and amiability, died universally regretted; and on the new king shooting himself (1820), General Boyer inherited the whole western end of the island, which he ruled as President of the Republic of Haiti. The eastern end still belonged nominally to Spain, but her authority was never really acknowledged, and in 1822 the whole island was united under Boyer.

France acknowledged the independence of Haiti in 1825, on the condition that the Haitian govern-

ment should pay 130,000,000 francs, as an indemnity for the losses of the French colonists during the revolution; but this demand was afterwards reduced to 90,000,000 francs. The eastern part of the island flatly refused to pay a penny of the tax imposed to raise this sum, the inhabitants justly saying that France had never held any jurisdiction over their soil, and Boyer brought upon himself great odium through agreeing to such a measure. He appears to have been a foolish, weak man, inordinately vain, and to have sown the seed of all the financial difficulties that have hampered the young republic in its career. Under his rule the condition of the island was rather retrograde than progressive; and, perceiving this, a political party was gradually formed, which brought about a revolution in 1842, when Boyer was forced to flee. Two years later the inhabitants of the Spanish portion of Hayti rose, under the leadership of Don Pablo Duarte, and in February, 1844, formed themselves into a separate State, under the name of the Dominican Republic.

At this point the history of the two republics becomes sufficiently separate to enable me to give a brief sketch of each.

In Haiti, the supreme power was successively held by Hérard, Guerrier, Pierrot, and Riché, until

1847, when General Faustin Soulouque was elected President, chiefly by the influence of the mulattoes, who, having ruled through his predecessors, thought they could perform the same *rôle* with him. But Soulouque soon showed he had a will of his own, and intended that his wishes should be respected. Finding that he was disinclined to govern through them, the mulattoes conspired to overthrow the new President, but the latter threw himself into the arms of the blacks, and a long and bloody struggle ensued, in which he was the victor. Soulouque now, in 1849, having crushed his enemies, caused himself to be declared Emperor, under the title of Faustin I., and ennobled a number of his followers, bestowing titles on them that sounded oddly enough in European ears, as Duke of Marmalade, Marquis of Lemonade, &c.; but these names were in reality taken from tracts of country that had been so called by the French, and that appear on the maps to this hour. The Emperor Faustin was a despotic and absolute monarch—so much so that his subjects becoming heartily wearied of his exactions, he was deposed, and fled to Jamaica early in 1859, when Fabre Nicholas Geffrard succeeded to power as President. The new ruler was so unpopular that an attempt was soon made to assassinate him, but he escaped, and misgoverned until

1867, when, seeing that an insurrection was imminent, he followed Faustin I. to Jamaica, and so contrived that all the public money upon which he could lay hands should accompany him.

Salnave was the next President—a man who seems to have conscientiously striven to do his duty, but by so acting to have incurred the hostility of the Haitian aristocracy—the mulattoes. Under this President the Constitution now in force was promulgated, which if adhered to would leave little to be desired; but there were plenty of people who made a rich harvest in troubled times, and encouraged discords to serve their own private ends. A serious revolution broke out in 1868 when "blood flowed in waves," the insurgents maiming and torturing their prisoners, murdering women and children, and committing every sort of atrocity. The President was finally driven into Port-au-Prince, where he fortified himself; but the rebels gained possession of his little fleet by treachery, bombarded the town, destroyed the fine new palace, and compelled Salnave to fly for his life into Dominican territory. He was arrested, brought back, tried by a military court on charges of cruelty, bloodshed, treason, &c., was pronounced guilty, sentenced, and twenty minutes later was shot to death on the steps of his own ruined palace!

On the 29th May, 1870, Nissage-Saget was named President of the Republic, and was succeeded in turn by Generals Michel Dominique and Boisrond-Canal. General Salomon, the present holder of that position, was elected on the 22nd October, 1879.

I mentioned before that the independence of the Dominican Republic had been proclaimed on the 27th February, 1844. The Haitians immediately invaded the new State with a force of 15,000 men, but were entirely defeated by General Santana, near the town of Azua, which was reduced to ashes, and by a spontaneous vote the successful general was placed in the presidential chair. In 1848 he resigned his office, and was succeeded by Ximenes; but the latter intrigued with Soulouque, and persuaded him to invade the state with 5000 men. Santana was called upon to maintain his country's rights, and with only 400 men he marched against the Haitians, met them at Ocoa, and defeated them utterly, on 21st April, 1849. Ximenes was now forced to resign, and Santana became Dictator. Originally a planter, he proved himself a man of great determination and energy, and, without being brilliant, he possessed a large fund of good common sense. His supreme command only lasted a few months, for in the autumn of 1849 Buenaventura

Baez was elected to the presidency by a great majority. During his term of office the Republic was recognized by Great Britain, France, and Denmark, and it really enjoyed a brief period of tranquillity. But the Dominicans soon agitated for annexation to the United States—a measure that Baez did not approve, as slavery existed in full force throughout the Southern States, and the status of a Dominican man of colour in America would have been no greater than a Carolina field-hand. He also sided with the clerical party, which rendered him unpopular, and in 1853 Santana was again elected President. By the latter, Baez was banished from the island. But whatever might have been Santana's good qualities, administrative talent was not amongst them, and the affairs of San Domingo fell into such confusion that Baez was recalled from his exile, and took the reins of government early in 1857. The following year saw the new President driven forth, and Santana reinstalled; and so matters continued until 1861, when Santana, disheartened at the perpetual intrigues that surrounded him, and believing that a strong ruling hand was requisite to keep his volatile countrymen quiet, threw himself suddenly into the arms of Spain, and surrendered San Domingo to that nation in May, 1861.

Fearing the return of slavery, the Dominicans opposed the transfer by every means in their power, more particularly as it became evident that Spain intended breaking every solemn promise she had made. In place of the improvements, and the appointment of Dominicans to island offices—both of which had been settled by treaty—bands of Spanish officials were drafted from slave-holding Cuba and Puerto Rico, and established in positions where they treated with ignominy the free coloured islanders. Mr. Hazard says, "A machinery of government was established, oppressive and intolerable, for which the people were expected to pay, and calculations were made, as though based upon an immense revenue, to be derived from a country flourishing in agriculture and commerce, and with a numerous and well-to-do population—just the reverse of the actual condition of the island. It is stated that the entire expenditure of the republic for the year preceding the Spanish annexation was but $241,347, while the estimates for the year 1863, remitted to Spain for approval, amounted to $4,476,000, and this to be applied to the administration of a territory some 20,000 square miles in extent, containing less than 150,000 inhabitants."

Finding their beautiful State reserved as a prey for hungry Spanish officials, insulted, ground down,

threatened with the yoke of slavery, the Dominicans rose in arms, and a terrible struggle ensued, during which the eastern part of Haiti was deluged in blood. Eventually the Spaniards were forced to withdraw, but not until they had burned every habitation they could reach, and slaughtered men and women indiscriminately. Hazard, who visited San Domingo shortly afterwards, and gathered his information from actors in these scenes, says, "I have neither the space nor the inclination to detail the horrors of this war, that continued until 1865, in which every atrocity that the human mind can conceive was committed; and the details of some of the acts of the Spanish officials show that, while they have not forgotten the example of crimes perpetrated in this very island by their bloodthirsty ancestors, the civilization of the present day has done nothing towards softening those instincts engendered by the blood of these same ancestors." By an Act of the Cortes, passed on 3rd March, 1865, the island of San Domingo was again declared free.

Santana had died of mortification at seeing the cruelties inflicted on his race by the people he had brought into the country, so Baez was again made President; but occupying the post only a short time, was succeeded by others, whose names would not

interest the general reader. Don Ignacio Gonzales was proclaimed President, with dictatorial powers, in April, 1878, but the following year saw another change, and Cesario Guillermo is the present head of affairs.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FRENCH, DANISH, DUTCH, AND VENEZUELAN POSSESSIONS IN THE WEST INDIES.

THE French possessions in the West Indies next claim our attention; these consist of the following islands:—Guadaloupe and its dependencies, Martinique, and St. Bartholomew.

Guadaloupe, written by the French Guadeloupe, is the most important of the Leeward Islands belonging to that nation, and is situated between lat. 15° 57′ and 16° 30′ N., and long. 61° 15′ and 61° 45′ W. Including dependencies, its area is 625 square miles, with a population of 152,910, three-fourths of whom are coloured.

Properly speaking, Guadaloupe consists of two islands, separated from each other by a narrow channel called Rivière Salée, that is navigable for small vessels, although in some parts it is only thirty yards in width. The western island, or Guadaloupe Proper, is 35 miles long, by 18 miles wide; the eastern, called Grande-Terre, is of nearly the same length, but only 12 miles in breadth. As

each end of the Rivière Salée there is a large bay, that on the north bearing the name of Grand Cul-de-Sac, and that on the south of Petit Cul-de-Sac; the length of channel separating these two harbours is only five miles.

Guadaloupe Proper is of volcanic origin, and is traversed from north to south by a mountain range, the highest point of which, a volcano, called La Souffrière, is 5000 feet above the level of the sea. Grande-Terre is low-lying, flat, and swampy, being chiefly composed of coralline matter and marine detritus. Several streams rise in the Souffrière range, but the adjacent island has no springs. The chief exports are sugar, molasses, rum, cotton, tobacco, coffee, and dye woods. Earthquakes and hurricanes are of frequent occurrence.

St. Louis, or Point à Pitre, stands on Grande-Terre, at the south entrance of the Rivière Salée, and possesses one of the best harbours in the Antilles. It was formerly the capital, with a population of 15,000, but in 1843 it was almost destroyed by an earthquake, and the chief town is now Basse-Terre.

The government of Guadaloupe consists of a Governor, assisted by a Privy Council of six members, and a General Council of thirty members. It has its seat at Basse-Terre, and within its juris-

POINT À PITRE, GUADALOUPE.

diction are included the islands of Marie Galante, Désirade, Les Saintes, and St. Martin.

It was colonized by the French in 1635, and remained in their possession until 1759, when it was taken by the British, who restored it to France four years later. It was again taken by the British in 1794, but recaptured by the French during the same year. Three hundred unfortunate French royalists on this occasion fell into the hands of the republican victors, who guillotined fifty of them, and fettering the remainder on the brink of the trenches they had defended, shot them down. Southey says, "The killed dragged the wounded, and some that in all probability were untouched, with their falling weight into the ditch, where the soil was immediately thrown upon them—the living, the wounded, and the dead together!"

In 1810 the island was again taken by the British, under General Beckwith, and was held by them until the peace of 1814, when it was restored to the French, in whose hands it has since remained.

Martinique, or Martinico, the most northward of the Windward Islands, is situated between lat. 14° 23′ and 14° 50′ N., and long. 60° 50′ and 61° 19′ W., lying 30 miles south-east of Dominica and 20 miles north of St. Lucia. It is 45 miles in length

by 15 miles at its greatest breadth, with an area of 381 square miles, and a population of 153,334, of whom 20,000 are whites, and about 16,000 coolies.

Both the shape and the surface of Martinique are very irregular; numerous conical hills break the landscape, and in the interior are three mountains, generally cloud-capped, one of which, Mont Pelée, reaches a height of 4438 feet above the level of the sea. These are all ancient volcanoes, and were supposed, after many years' quietude, to be extinct, but in 1851 Mont Pelée burst forth in full vigour, and did considerable damage. Between the spurs sent out by the main range are broad fertile valleys, watered by small rivers that in the rainy season become fierce torrents. The coast is broken up into numerous bays, which are difficult of entry.

There are two towns, Fort de France and St. Pierre, of which the former, being the seat of government, is considered the capital, although St. Pierre far exceeds it in size and commercial importance. About one-third of the island is under cultivation, its principal productions being sugar, coffee, indigo, maize, cocoa, and ginger. The commerce of the island is chiefly with France, and great industrial energy has been exhibited by the inhabitants. Associations have of late years been formed for the promotion of agriculture, a school of arts and manu-

SAINT PIERRE, MARTINIQUE

facture has come into existence, excellent machinery is employed in the preparation of indigo and other products, and potteries are supplying the wants of the population. The great drawback to the well-being of the island is its liability to earthquakes, hurricanes, cholera, yellow fever, and last, but far from least, terrible droughts.

The government and the history of Martinique are almost identical with that of Guadaloupe, and need not be recapitulated. About nine miles distant from Fort de France, a small island rises abruptly from the sea, called the Diamond Rock. This the British took possession of, and kept a naval garrison on it during the whole of the war, the rock being rated by the Admiralty as a sloop of war.

St. Bartholomew is a small island situated in the north-east angle of the West Indian Archipelago, about 25 miles north of St. Kitts. It is six miles long by three miles broad, and has an area of 35 square miles, supporting a population of about 3000, the great majority of whom are coloured. The shores of the island are deeply indented, and its surface irregular, consisting of barren hills and fertile valleys, the latter producing sugar, cotton, tobacco, fruit, and vegetables. It contains one port on the western side, La Carénage, and near to this

harbour is situated the capital, Gustavia, inhabited by a mixed European and American population. There are no springs or rivers on St. Bartholomew, and both fuel and water are scarce.

This island was settled by the French in 1648, and after changing hands frequently was ceded to Sweden in 1785. It constituted the last-named country's sole West Indian colony, until the year 1878, when it again returned to its original owners, the French.

Slavery was abolished throughout the French colonies in 1848.

Danish Possessions in the West Indies.

The Danish possessions in the West Indies consist of the islands of St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John.

St. Thomas, one of the Virgin Islands, is situated about 30 miles east of Puerto Rico, and with an area of 35 square miles, supports a population of 14,000, one-tenth of whom are white, two-thirds black, and the remainder mixed. A mountain ridge, attaining at one point an elevation of 1480 feet, forms a backbone to the island, and the consequent unevenness of surface renders a large portion of it unfit for cultivation. The soil is a dry loam, in which maize,

ST. THOMAS. [Page 216.

esculent roots, and certain fruits, thrive, but the products of the island are insufficient for one-twentieth of its population. St. Thomas owes its flourishing condition to the fact that several large lines of steamers call at its port, and most travellers in that part of the world, whatever may be their destination, make a longer or shorter stay there. Charlotte Amalie, the only town, is built on the north shore of a fine bay, which has anchorage for a fleet. Hurricanes seem to occur periodically, and commit great havoc. By that of the 29th October, 1867, the Royal Mail packet "Rhone" was lost, together with her entire crew; four other steamers belonging to the same company were driven ashore or damaged, and fifty vessels were disabled. The town is clean, and lighted with gas. There being no rivers, and only one small spring on the island, droughts are frequent.

Negotiations were opened in 1867 for the transfer of St. Thomas to the United States, but the project ultimately fell through.

St. Croix, or Santa Cruz, is the largest and southernmost of the Virgin Islands. With a length of 25 miles, and a breadth at the widest part of five miles, it contains an area of 84 square miles, supporting a population of 22,760. A range of low hills occupies the northern portion of the island, other-

wise its surface is flat; but streams being numerous and the soil fertile, nearly the whole of the land is available for agricultural purposes. The capital is Christianstadt, or the Basin, a well-built town standing on a gentle declivity on the northern shore, and here the seat of government for the Danish West Indies is fixed. Discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, it has been alternately in the hands of the Dutch, British, Spanish, and French, by the last of whom it was ceded to Denmark in 1733. The English took St. Croix in 1807, but it was restored to the Danes by the Treaty of Paris.

St. John is a little island situated within a short distance of Tortola, and contains several good anchorages, the best of which is Coral Bay. Sugar, coffee, and cotton are its chief products. St. John is the only town, and the population of the island was 1054 at the last census.

THE NETHERLANDS' POSSESSIONS IN THE WEST INDIES.

The Dutch possessions in the West Indies consist of the islands of Curaçao, Aruba, St. Martin, Bonaire, St. Eustache, and Saba.

Curaçao is situated in the Caribbean Sea, about 46 miles north of the coast of Venezuela, between

lat. 12° 3′ and 12° 24′ N., and long. 68° 47′ and 69° 16′ W. It has a length of 36 miles, and a breadth of eight miles, with an area of 164 square miles, containing 23,972 inhabitants. Curaçao is exceedingly barren, having a hilly surface and rugged coasts. Water is very scarce, droughts of frequent occurrence, and yellow fever visits the island every few years. So poor, indeed, is the soil that provisions are imported. A little sugar, tobacco, and maize, are however raised, and from the lime is made the liqueur for which this arid spot is principally celebrated. Santa Anna on the south-west coast is the chief harbour, and upon it is situated Willemstad, or Curaçao, the capital. It was settled by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, and after acknowledging many masters was given up to the Dutch in 1814.

St. Martin is an island with an area of 30 square miles, lying about five miles south of Anguilla. A small patch of its northern portion belongs to France. Neither St. Martin nor any of the remaining Dutch possessions demand further notice. Their total area is 356 square miles, with a population of 41,024.

Slavery was abolished in the Dutch West Indies on 1st July, 1863.

THE VENEZUELAN POSSESSIONS IN THE WEST INDIES.

Beyond recording that the island of Margarita and several other islets off the coast of Venezuela belong to that Republic, I find no single fact worthy of being brought to the reader's notice. A few fishermen inhabit their shores, but neither statistics nor other information concerning them has been tabulated.

With these little-frequented spots I close this brief sketch of the West Indies. A chain of islands favoured by God until they remind us of an earthly Paradise, has been converted by man into a vast shambles, possessing a history that if faithfully recorded raises only abhorrence against the perpetrators of such fell deeds, and pity for the wretched victims of long years of cruelty. The plague spot of slavery has all but passed away, and with the introduction of free coolie labour let us hope that a bright future is in store for the Antilles, and that the bounteous soil will give forth its wealth as abundantly as in the evil days when the hills resounded to the crack of the overseer's whip, and every clod was moistened with the tears of unhappy beings held body and soul in degrading bondage.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

THE BAHAMAS.

THE year 1877 was entered upon with a deficit of £3000, and a public debt £6000 larger than in 1876. Public debt, £61,161; the interest thereon ranging from £4 15*s.* to £6 per cent.

Imports and Exports from 1871 to 1877.

Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£	£
1871	239,190	152,410
1872	201,051	136,224
1873	226,306	156,613
1874	183,993	130,292
1875	172,183	108,893
1876	153,614	106,836
1877	153,667	110,931

The exports in 1877 comprise—

Salt	to the value of	£6,476.
Sponges	,,	18,508.
Pine-apples	,,	40,331.
Other Fruits	,,	5,510.
Woods	,,	5,716.

Births in 1877	1,590.
Deaths, do.	655.

Revenue and Expenditure—

Revenue for 1877	£36,661.
Expenditure do.	36,413.

JAMAICA.

Years.	Population.								
	White.		Coloured.		Black.		Total.		
	Males.	Females	Males.	Females	Males.	Females	Males.	Females	Total.
1861	7,295	6,521	38,223	42,842	166,277	179,097	213,521	227,743	441,264
1871	6,909	6,192	48,048	52,298	191,498	201,209	246,573	259,581	506,154

Revenue and Expenditure.							
	1871.	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1878.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue . .	439,116	494,564	514,766	541,799	590,938	572,686	532,788
Expenditure .	454,774	477,808	523,422	537,263	586,520	537,359	536,206

The public debt in 1875 amounted to £678,229, paying 4, 5, and 6 per cent.

Imports and Exports from 1871 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1871	1,331,186	1,248,685
1872	1,559,602	1,418,444
1873	1,733,121	1,226,011
1874	1,762,817	1,442,080
1875	1,759,942	1,410,485
1876	1,700,253	1,517,015
1877	1,552,339	1,458,669

Principal Articles of Export (1875).	Value.
	£.
Bees' Wax	4,437
Coffee	219,093
Ginger	26,623
Pimento	40,250
Rum	320,774
Sugar (Raw)	454,444
Wood (Logwood, &c.) in 1874.	147,564

ANTIGUA.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	33,313	33,536	37,818	32,078	34,202
Expenditure	38,168	35,650	34,159	33,530	35,125

The public debt at the beginning of 1878 was £58,510, bearing interest at 6 per cent.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports
	£.	£.
1873	169,156	170,797
1874	146,758	106,705
1875	180,363	249,677
1876	133,502	136,393
1877	170,693	210,365

The quantity of sugar shipped was as follows :—

1875...14,677 hhds., valued at £13 10 a hhd.
1876... 8,327 ,, ,, 14 0 ,,
1877...10,002 ,, ,, 17 0 ,,

The quantity of land returned as cultivated in 1877 was 19,508 acres, and of uncultivated land 43,705 acres

MONTSERRAT.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	5,566	5,968	5,473	5,774	6,242
Expenditure	4,704	5,497	5,661	5,349	5,918

Public debt nil.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	20,700	36,783
1874	23,957	33,079
1875	26,658	33,554
1876	23,989	28,063
1877	25,471	32,065

Principal articles exported :—Cattle, fire-wood, lime-juice, molasses, and sugar.

ST. CHRISTOPHER.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	24,748	24,182	26,566	31,577	24,165
Expenditure	34,424	27,764	30,726	32,152	27,128

Public debt in 1878 £8339, bearing interest at 6 per cent.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	162,355	179,963
1874	128,810	146,142
1875	132,858	140,542
1876	139,290	156,150
1877	134,534	147,164

Principal articles exported:—Molasses, potatoes (sweet), rum, salt, and sugar.

NEVIS.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	8,764	9,876	9,594	10,335	12,664
Expenditure	7,845	11,150[1]	7,295	10,444	12,364

Public debt in 1878 £2400, bearing interest at 6 per cent.

[1] £5000 for immigration.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	52,291	83,223
1874	38,100	60,340
1875	37,931	57,681
1876	38,032	54,682
1877	35,270	49,566

Principal articles exported:—Horned cattle, molasses, and sugar.

ANGUILLA.

Revenue about £500; expenditure the same.

VIRGIN ISLANDS.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	1,464	1,759	No rets.	2,049	No rets.
Expenditure	1,507	1,697	do.	2,039	do.

No public debt.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1876.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	2,613	5,654
1874	6,838	4,387
1875	No returns.	No returns.
1876	2,774	4,773

Principal articles exported:—Cattle, charcoal, goats, horses, and sheep.

DOMINICA.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	15,749	17,903	22,667	18,809	19,100
Expenditure	17,120	17,457	21,966	18,789	19,242

Public debt consists of Hurricane Loan, £2400; and Water Works Loan, £5900.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1876.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	62,552	62,020
1874	56,714	67,719
1875	62,311	70,769
1876	57,657	76,661

Principal articles exported:—Cattle, cocoa, lime-juice, molasses, rum, and sugar.

BARBUDA.

No returns, the island being private property.

BARBADOS.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	123,677	128,869	132,122	117,057	121,432
Expenditure	121,797	123,961	126,844	123,727	119,611

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	1,193,814	1,024,083
1874	1,049,248	1,140,767
1875	1,187,493	1,479,910
1876	1,027,871	944,303
1877	1,114,313	1,097,912

	£.	s.	d.
Public Debt . . .	24,166	13	4
Sinking Fund . . .	15,933	12	10½
Balance . .	8,322	0	5½

Principal articles exported :—Cotton, molasses, petroleum, rum, and sugar

ST. VINCENT.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	35,473	33,344	27,852	28,858	27,859
Expenditure	32,422	36,359	29,693	27,997	28,754

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	161,497	201,665
1874	160,772	200,516
1875	158,056	207,616
1876	162,023	183,301
1877	148,198	175,380

No public debt.

Principal articles exported :—Arrowroot, cotton, molasses, rum, and sugar.

GRENADA.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	25,482	23,404	29,442	26,286	29,084
Expenditure	27,225	25,730	27,553	26,723	29,581

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	133,061	147,579
1874	106,637	158,866
1875	118,385	171,831
1876	114,800	178,583
1877	127,204	145,906

Public debt £10,000.

Principal articles exported :—Cocoa, cotton, rum, spices, and sugar.

TOBAGO.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	9,498	9,518	11,594	No rets.	No rets.
Expenditure	11,330	9,578	11,484	do.	do.

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	43,743	45,280
1874	46,435	45,387
1875	67,772	92,015
1876	54,582	79,670
1877	58,750	68,989

No public debt.

Principal articles exported :—Cocoa-nuts, molasses, rum, and sugar.

ST. LUCIA.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	19,907	21,131	25,390	27,850	23,286
Expenditure	20,346	24,268	28,930	29,242	28,053

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	116,036	151,011
1874	127,000	146,000
1875	150,740	159,468
1876	106,063	148,718
1877	110,588	178,734

Public debt £44,100; sinking fund £14,794.

Principal articles exported :—Cattle, cocoa, logwood, rum, sugar, and molasses.

TRINIDAD.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	281,570	276,529	291,469	316,170	310,337
Expenditure	326,282	294,006	282,294	318,362	312,586

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	1,324,432	1,733,615
1874	1,342,992	1,412,260
1875	1,507,794	1,625,082
1876	1,666,268	1,636,618
1877	1,708,457	2.093,650

Public debt—£245,800 for railways; £32,200 secured on general revenue.

Principal articles exported:—Asphaltum, coco-nuts, cocoa, molasses, rum, and sugar.

BERMUDA.

	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
Revenue	38,030	29,066	25,721	27,374	30,353
Expenditure	35,146	29,800	28,269	25,788	26,563

Imports and Exports from 1873 to 1877.		
Years.	Imports.	Exports.
	£.	£.
1873	128,065	64,887
1874	252,435	81,585
1875	244,486	61,253
1876	244,676	74,514
1877	279,800	74,981

Public debt in 1876 £11,484.

Principal articles exported :—Arrowroot, onions, potatoes, and tomatoes.

CUBA AND PUERTO RICO.

Years.	Exports from Cuba and Puerto Rico to Great Britain.	Imports of British Produce into Cuba and Puerto Rico.
	£.	£.
1873	5,109,259	2,751,927*
1874	3,764,587	1,857,768
1875	3,668,776	2,630,634
1876	2,943,385	2,015,113
1877	1,505,245	2,243,771

The staple article of export was sugar, amounting, in 1877, to £801,161 in value.

Next in importance was tobacco and cigars, amounting to £627,215.

* This and the following returns are from "Martin's Statesman's Year Book" for 1879.

Haiti and San Domingo.

Years.	Exports from Haiti and San Domingo to Great Britain.	Imports of British Produce into Haiti and San Domingo.
	£.	£.
1873	339,002	548,023
1874	344,461	441,952
1875	443,837	693,290
1876	409,961	356,447
1877	247,370	383,203

The chief articles of export to the United Kingdom, in 1877, were coffee and mahogany.

The French Possessions in the West Indies.

The commercial intercourse of the French colonies is almost entirely with the mother country. Guadaloupe and other French islands, during 1877, sent exports to the United Kingdom to the value of £170,114, and received British produce, chiefly cotton goods, of the value of £180,059.

The Danish Possessions in the West Indies.

Value of total exports from above to the United Kingdom in 1877 } £14,676 (chiefly sugar).
Value of British produce imported into the above in 1877 } £225,371 (chiefly cotton goods).

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